



# LETTERS

FROM

SWITZERLAND AND FRANCE;

WRITTEN

During a Residence

OF BETWEEN TWO AND THREE YEARS

IN

DIFFERENT PARTS OF THOSE COUNTRIES.

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Je dirai : J'étois lu telle chose m'avint:  
Vous y croirez être vous-même.

LA FONTAINE.

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## LETTERS

FROM

### SWITZERLAND AND FRANCE.

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#### LETTER I.

*Geneva.*

I HAD long wished to visit the scenes of my youth at Geneva, and to show some parts of France, and perhaps a corner of Italy, to those of my family, whom circumstances had not separated me from, as they had from you, and it was with very great pleasure that I found myself with them on board the *John and Francis*, Capt. Bass, on the morning of the 23d of July.

During the little time we remained at Newport, many of our old acquaintances found us out, and I had an opportunity of forming, in the person of Mr. Lequinio Kerblay, a new acquaintance, which I think of with pleasure: the letters he gave me for his friends and correspondents in France, have been of essential service to us; this gentleman resides at Newport as commercial agent of France; the name of consul being now destined for higher purposes, and consequently withdrawn from common use, as that of emperor was among the Romans. He had taken an active, and indeed a ferocious part, in the revolutionary war of France, and will probably be handed down to posterity in no very amiable light. But posterity will do him justice, I trust, in another respect—it will observe, that he was the first public functionary, who ventured to call the attention of the government to the cruelty of their agents in La Vendée, attributing their conduct, and surely by a strange perversion of reason, to a sentiment of concealed royalism, which induced them (he asserted) to render the republican cause as odious as possible: it is thus that James II., says Dalrymple, was persuaded, that Kirk's abominable conduct in the West of England had arisen from a secret wish to bring discredit upon the government. Mr. Lequinio may have been misled, he indeed certainly was, in the maze of public affairs, when the reason of the whole nation seems for an

interval to have been suspended, when abject fear, strangely combined with political enthusiasm, took place of every sentiment of justice and honour, and even of humanity; but he soothes himself, I presume, with the idea that his intentions were good, whilst he sighs in honest sincerity of heart over the horrors of what is irretrievably past.

It seemed as if every other wind but the north-east had been extinct, for after calms it still returned, and could not exhaust itself in a succession of gales; still, however, our good ship gained to the eastward, and on the morning of the twenty-fifth, the long-desired and much wished-for land appeared in sight, and I once more beheld the coast of Europe, after an interval of twenty-five years, after a long vicissitude of cares and joys, over which my mind rapidly glanced, as I gazed from the deck on what appeared at a distance to be a cloud, but which the experience of the seamen taught them to be Cape Ortegal. In a few days we had doubled the Cape, and found ourselves in the Bay of Biscay, which, instead of that tremendous sea for which it is distinguished, displayed the smoothness and tranquillity of some gentle lake.

You will perceive, by looking at a chart, that we were by no means in the right direction for Bourdeaux, and it was not, in fact, until the evening of the sixth day after we got sight of land, when to a continuation of calms, during which a negro in his canoe might with ease have navigated this sea of storms and tempests, there succeeded a gentle breeze from the south-west, that insensibly became stronger, and we had the delight of feeling ourselves wafted towards the entrance of the Gironde at the rate of seven miles an hour. I can hardly believe that Columbus and his Spaniards were more eager to behold the land on the second of October, 1492, than we now were. The impatience of all on board was visible, and the captain, who had more equality of demeanour than most men I have known, was continually on the look out, with all the anxiety of expectation. Tired of every now and then mistaking a star for the light-house, I turned in, as the seamen call it, and shortly after heard the joyful cry of the Corduan right a-head. The Corduan is a light-house, so called from the name of some builder at a former period; it is one hundred and seventy-five feet high, and stands on an isolated rock, immediately opposite to the mouth of the Gironde, and about six miles from the land, and nearly in the latitude of the northern extremity of Lake Champlain; the rest of the night was passed in short tacks under easy sail, and at day-break we had the pleasure to see the main land of France, stretching to the right and left, and two pilot-boats endeavouring, under press of sail, to reach us. The country appeared flat, with

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gentle hills rising at a distance, the pilot had all the appearance of an overseer upon Santee, descended from the ancient French settlers, and his boat was rigged as a lugger.

The pilot was a man of sense, and gave me a great deal of information, which was afterwards confirmed by my own observation, and other means of knowledge. The war had been very ruinous to the commerce of Bourdeaux, and was, therefore, by no means a popular thing with the mercantile people: to *his* business it had been fatal, ours being the only vessel he had brought in for six weeks. Labour, he told me, was better paid than before the revolution, and the peasantry were now relieved from some disagreeable sources of oppression, but the articles of life were higher, taxes were greater, and the conscription, which kept all the young people in the grasp of the law, was tormenting. The monks and nuns were dispersed, their property sold, and the clergy were now as much too poor as they had been too rich; but religion had not lost ground, the re-establishment of Sunday, as a day of worship, had given universal joy, and a procession had lately taken place, after an interval of many years, to the comfort of all devout people, and never had a procession been so attended; so much indeed were the hearts of people warmed by the rays of returning piety, that it was become customary for the peasant, in the collection of his little harvest, to put aside such a portion for the curate, as was in great measure equivalent to the tithes of former times: the best meat was ten sols, and bread five sols, a pound, and a day labourer received, besides his maintenance, twenty-five sols a day, which is about an English shilling.

The next day brought with it all the wonders we expected. A variety of figures, moving along the streets, attracted our attention, but none more forcibly than the fruit women, with high caps of stiff muslin, with long waists, short petticoats, and mounted upon asses. In our neighbourhood was one of the most frequented walks, which upon going to we found thronged with original figures, who crowded along, whilst we, walking with the crowd, or seated in the shade, made our observations at full liberty, without any danger of being attended to, or understood.

We remained at Bourdeaux too short a time to know much more of the inhabitants than may be acquired at public places. The American consul and his lady, Mr. and Mrs. Lee, were extremely kind and hospitable to us: but in their house we were as in America, and saw the interior of only one family besides, which was that of the venerable Pierre Texier, whom I had corresponded with formerly; he had struggled through the revolution, so fatal to almost every merchant of Bourdeaux, and now lived in the bosom of a fine family, and in the exercise of great hospitality.

By what I could learn, literature is not as fashionable in Bourdeaux as it was formerly, the demands of the revolution having taken away the youth, for a time, from attending to any call but that of arms, and the Genius of commerce having revived during the short interval of peace, with a degree of enthusiasm which entirely absorbed the public mind.

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## LETTER II.

*Geneva.*

THE suburbs of the city extend so far, and the succession of country houses, and of villages is so continued, that we were at the first post before we thought ourselves well out of Bourdeaux. We soon discovered that our carriage was not as cheap a one as we at first had thought ; and I foresaw, without any great regret however, that we should be detained in some town in order to have it repaired. Towns, villages, churches, castles, and country-houses, were on both sides of us, as we rode through one continued vineyard, loaded with the finest grapes ; at some distance on the left was the Garonne ; beyond were hills, which appeared as well cultivated as the plain, but against which it is probable that the sea formerly rolled ; no fences or hedges are any where to be seen, except in the neighbourhood of houses, which takes away from the prospect the appearance of distinct and independent property, that I remember being pleased with in England. But the road was excellent, and we were soon at Castres.

Strange as it may seem to you, there are very few French who have yet found out that the Americans are, in any respect, a separate people from the English ; a want of discernment which exposes us to the inconvenience perhaps, of a somewhat higher charge at an inn, but which also secures to us a great deal of respectful attention we might not otherwise experience. Notwithstanding the long continued hostility of the two governments, the English are still very much respected in France ; the careless air and liberal manners of their young men, who used to gallop over Europe, are remembered with regret ; the undaunted perseverance of the English nation, which even the servility of a French newspaper cannot altogether conceal the knowledge of, commands respect ; and their unbounded charity and hospitality to the Emigrants, who sought for shelter in England, can never be forgotten.

We were the next morning early at Agen, the capital of a district long famous for grain and fruit of every sort, and for the neighbouring meadows on the Garonne, and where one of the lar-

gest inns I ever beheld seemed at once to possess the largest and dirtiest kitchen : there was meat and game of every sort, and fish in abundance, and ortolans by dozens, and four or five cooks busily employed.

I found several English officers here, who were prisoners of war, and who fastened upon me, as they would have done upon a countryman, nor did I feel less for them than if I had been : there were about too hundred sailors, they told me, in the town, who were allowed to undertake work for the inhabitants, and enjoyed themselves exceedingly.

We had as yet constantly followed the course of the Garonne, through a highly cultivated but flat country, whilst the view on the left had been bounded by the steep declivity before mentioned, which was clothed with vines. At length, not long after we had left Agen, the road inclined to the left, and we began to ascend, and were soon on the summit of the high ground. It is here that I could wish for the powers of description. The country which now offered itself to our admiration was in gentle waves, such as you might suppose from a continuation of the inequalities between the dwelling house at Belvoir and the overseer's cottage ; of this every part appeared in high cultivation as far as the eye could reach, except where villages and gentlemen's houses intervened, or some rural church, or a clump of trees diversified the scene : it seemed the bosom of all bounteous nature swelling with delight and plenty : behind us, on turning, we beheld the river we had left ; its banks were crowned with all that human art with industry could collect ; there were houses, and cottages, and ancient castles, and cultivated fields, and a navigable river, and beyond all these various objects, there were the Pyrennees. To me they appeared like the Slate River mountain, as it is seen from Belvoir, but extending a great way farther to the east and west, and with the additional importance of being the barrier between two great nations. I can conceive how the very name of these celebrated mountains excites your imagination, and that you are already thinking of Blanche and her sweetheart, and of the Banditti, and of Ludovico. Our six horses had for the last two or three posts been diminished to four, and we were allowed to keep that number afterwards on paying for five. Our mode of travelling was to set off after an early breakfast, and to make our principal meal at night, relying always on finding a good supper, in consequence of our courier preceding us by about an hour : towards evening we descended from the high grounds and entered Mossaick, an ancient town on the Tarn, a few miles above its junction with the Garonne.

In the neighbourhood of Mossaick, on the Tarn, and in several places on the Garonne, we saw floating mills ; a mode of con-

struction which might very advantageously be adopted on many of our rapid streams in America. We were now soon again in the valley of the Garonne, and traversed the same fertile fields as before ; the peasantry were preparing to sow their wheat ; hemp, tobacco, or artificial grass, occupied every spot, which was flat and moist, but whenever it swelled into somewhat of a hill, it was cultivated in vines, which were loaded with grapes, and these were as much at the discretion of travellers, as the cherries and peaches of an orchard by the road side are in Virginia.

The houses, in general, were good, and the oxen the largest I had ever seen ; but the persons at work in the fields were principally women and old men ; the young men had either been drawn away into the army, or were otherwise employed. We met with few travellers in carriages, or on horseback, but such was the succession of labourers, of soldiers, and of other travellers on foot, that, for the space of several hundred miles, we were never as much as five minutes without seeing some one : following us on the map you will easily find Mountaban, where we halted at the gate, and sent to the post-house for our horses, where, for less than sixpence, we bought a basket of figs, grapes, and peaches, besides being admired for our generosity.

Having crossed the canal of Languedoc at a small distance from the city of Thoulouse, and driven, for at least half a mile, by the side of an ancient wall, which looked more like a Roman than a modern work, we entered into a gloomy, grass-grown square, and passed along a continuation of narrow streets to an inn, which, without the plenty of the house of Agen, was infinitely more defective in point of cleanliness.

Thoulouse is situated in a fertile country, and in the vicinity of the canal ; neither its trade, however, nor its population, have been ever such as might have been expected, and are both much declined since the revolution : it is, in a few words, a large, old-fashioned, gloomy place, with several ancient and venerable churches, with a handsome theatre, and with a choice of beautiful public walks. Of the canal, which terminates within a short distance of the city, on forming a junction with the Garonne, you may easily conceive the importance by placing a map of Europe before you, and by observing that it connects the navigation of the Mediterranean with that of the Atlantic.

The number of men employed in digging the channel, and constructing the works, was never less than eight thousand, for fourteen years, and they were sometimes increased to twelve thousand, and the expense incurred was about a million sterling : the present annual expense for repairs and attendance is about seventeen thousand pounds sterling, but the government derives

an income of nearly twenty-five thousand pounds from the tolls, clear of all deductions, and the saving to the community at large is not less than two hundred thousand pounds a year.

I was sorry to leave a place so renowned in history as Toulouse, and so much spoken of by travellers, after so short a stay ; but your brother was before us, the expense was great, and more of our senses were in continual sufferance than I would wish to enumerate : from such a place the transition into well cultivated fields and loaded vineyards, amidst carts and baskets filled with grapes, and all the hurry, plenty, and festivity of the vintage, was really delightful.

Our course, if you will allow me a sea term, was generally in the direction of the canal, and we frequently saw and sometimes crossed it ; the banks were every where planted with Lombardy Poplars, and the locks appeared in perfect order.

From Narbonne to Beziers, the road is short, and we arrived at a very early hour, through crowds of people returning into town from the vintage of the day : some very pretty girls were of the number, and mounted, two at a time, upon asses, with old and young people, and children in carts, and servants carrying baskets of grapes on their heads. It seemed a procession in honour of Bacchus. We here joined the line of the canal again, and, admiring the neighbouring hills, whose sides were covered with olive trees, we drove up a very steep ascent, under an ancient gateway, into a narrow street, which conducted us to our inn. Mulberry trees had become common for the last two or three posts, and we were now in a country where wine and oil, and honey and silk, and every sort of grain abounded. Read what Young says of the locks at the commencement of the canal at Beziers, and of the subterranean passage at Malpas, for I could give you but a very incorrect idea of either. It rained excessively the next day, and was so cloudy that we could see nothing, not even the Mediterranean, though we were frequently upon very high ground and within a few miles of it.

Passing rapidly along, and staying but a day or two at most in the largest towns, I should only have to borrow from books, if I were to pretend to enter into a minute description of persons, places, and manners. I can only tell you, therefore, of what we saw. Montpellier is an ancient city, but long posterior to the time of the Romans ; it had never, therefore, any antiquities to boast of, but it has been distinguished for carrying on an extensive trade, ever since the days of Jacques Cœur, who was so ill rewarded for his services to Charles VII., to the period of the revolution, and being placed in a mild climate, and known as the residence of several distinguished physicians, was almost proverbially the retreat of consumptive people.

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## LETTER III.

*Geneva.*

WE had now been for some days past, in the country of the ancient Troubadours, who, wandering over Europe, and singing of the great deeds of valiant knights, of love, and of the ladies, were the revivers of good manners, and of music, and so feasted, and so honoured in private, and upon all public occasions, that the most distinguished personages of the age condescended to be enrolled in their fraternity :—the counts of Poitou and of Champagne were both Troubadours : the language there used, and which took its name from the neighbouring province of Provence, was one of the two which prevailed in France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries : the other, which was spoken in the North, was called the Romance tongue : the Troubadours in their Provencal produced little else than love songs, stories of knight errantry in verse, and satires, which they called, I know not why, *Sirventes* :—but the writer of the Romance language have excited the delight even of succeeding ages, by their *fabliaux*, which were drawn, with some embellishments indeed, and some exaggerations, from scenes of real life :—it is this circumstance that has given a name to those agreeable productions, which at some time or other of life are found so amusing.

At about a mile from Montpellier is a canal communicating with one of these, and by that means with Cette, whence the merchants of the neighbouring country made their shipments to foreign parts whilst there was trade in France. As the distance to Cette admitted of our going and returning in the course of the same day, we could not resist our desire of taking a nearer view of the Mediterranean, and set out early one morning in company with a lively, good-natured, well-behaved Virginian, whose physician had sent him to the south of France. He had found us out directly on our arrival, and had manifested a sincere and strongly expressed satisfaction, at the sight of an American family, but when he found that we had been upon James river, and could talk of *Rappahannock* and *Potowmack*, and heard us speak with respect and affection of persons, whose names were familiar to him, I thought he would have devoured us. It was one continued vineyard up to the gates of the ancient town of Frontignan, and Montpellier appeared, when we looked back upon it, like some capital city, proudly seated on an eminence, amidst tributary villages. This Frontignan is a miserable place, notwithstanding the fertile soil it stands in, and the excellent wine it gives name to. The houses and walls appear to be of white clay, rather than of stone, and the streets are hardly broader than the walks of a modern garden. We found Cette a small and not very clean town, with a harbour and a light-house, and some shipping, but with every thing in miniature.

The next day we were satisfied to remain at Montpellier, and went to the play at night, where the music was delightful, the singing superior to any thing I ever had heard, and the dancing, as I was told, in a very great style ; I say, as I was told, for to me it appeared to consist too much of feats of strength and activity : I could not admire that whirling round with such rapidity that the human form was hardly discernible, those studied postures, and that total disregard of all decency in dress. An Indian warrior prepared for battle, is hardly less encumbered with clothes than an Opera dancer in France.

In former times, Montpellier must have been a very agreeable place to spend a winter and a spring at : a clear and wholesome atmosphere, society composed of people from all parts of the world ; public amusements in perfection ; literature, and all that extensive commerce, all that nature in its utmost bounty can bestow, were here combined, whilst the occasional residence of The States, gave it the air of a capital.

It would be useless, and it would be melancholy to say, in how many respects it is not what it was : we should have protracted our stay, however, a few days, had not — been before us. As it was, we departed on the morning of the fifth of October, and took the road to Nismes ; a name not as familiar to your ear as Montpellier, but to the full as deserving of your attention.

The country we travelled through continued such as we had seen, being diversified with wheat fields, vineyards, plantations of olive and mulberry trees ; but we began to observe mountains at a distance, and the road was sometimes hilly, so that the festoons of grapes, which lined the way, were now a little more in our power, for as the carriage necessarily went more slowly, we were at times enabled to get out and walk ; such a circumstance was never disagreeable to the younger part of the family, and to our servant-maid, whose appearance you must remember, her looks upon such occasions, when she found herself in the undisturbed possession of as many grapes as she chose to eat, gave me an idea of what Candid's must have been, when offering to return the pieces of gold which the children had left behind, he was told, to his great astonishment, that he might keep them.

Nismes was once under the government of the Romans, a city of great extent, but of its ancient walls nothing now remains, but one solitary dismantled tower, which is at a considerable distance from the modern town ; it contains, however, more Roman antiquities, and in a greater state of preservation, than any town of France : you have often heard of the celebrated *Maison Quarree*, (the model after which the capital of Richmond was originally

planned;) it is a Roman temple of the smaller size, all elegance and simplicity, perfectly entire, but disfigured by dormant windows, which had been opened by a society of Monks, who used it formerly as a Chapel. It was for a long time doubtful to what divinity this temple had been erected—but the difficulty has been very ingeniously got the better of by a Mr. Seguiet, who has shown to conviction, it is said, that the holes left in the frieze and architecture, and which held the pins that secured the inscription, could belong to no letters, but such as show that it was dedicated to Caius and Lucius, adopted sons of Augustus. Prepared as one is to admire it, the impression, at first sight, rather falls short of the spectator's imagination, and it appears diminutive: at a small distance from it is the amphitheatre, the form of which you are acquainted with, but it would be difficult for you to conceive an idea of the effect which its extreme magnitude and venerable antiquity have upon the mind. Although far from being entire, it is in some parts sufficiently preserved to convey an idea of what it must have been formerly, and one conceives how seventeen thousand persons may have sat at their ease in it.

We went in at the ancient entrance, walked for some time in the lobby, as I should call it in a modern theatre, then penetrated by one of the vomitories to the seats, and ascended to the top of the building, where we remained for some time in silent contemplation of this mighty edifice. It seemed worthy of those who had been masters of the world, and they now appeared to us capable of having performed all the great things which history has attributed to them. Upwards of seventeen hundred years had rolled away since the amphitheatre was built, and yet where avarice or the fury of an enemy have not made great efforts to destroy it, the parts are as entire as if it had been erected in the last century.

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#### LETTER IV.

*Geneva.*

WE might here have shortened our distance, by taking the road which led to the Pont de St. Esprit, but Avignon was not to be overlooked, and we accordingly proceeded in that direction, and continued to ascend a high and bleak ridge, where the land became poor, and the vineyards thinly scattered. To the stout horses and oxen of the fertile plain we had quitted, succeeded small mules and asses, one of which last I saw yoked to the same plough with a miserable cow. We also saw large flocks of sheep, with a moveable hut for the shepherd, and guarded by stout dogs,

whose necks were armed for battle against the wolves. At length, after a long and tedious ascent, the valley of the Rhone began to open to our view ; a valley thickly interspersed with every mark of human industry and prosperity, and a river so often mentioned in history, and proceeding, I knew, from the very spot towards which we were bending our steps. In addition to this prospect, there stood, commanding our attention on the back-ground, a long chain of the distant Alps in all their sublimity of height, and of snow, as old as the world itself. After a few miles, the prospect of the valley became enlarged, Villeneuve was at our feet, then came the Rhone, then a small island, next the stately ruins of a Roman bridge, and in the midst of meadows, vineyards, and gardens, the venerable city of Avignon, so famed for its numerous churches, and distinguished by the palace of its former sovereign, and still defended, in appearance, by its ancient walls. I must now refer you to the history of Jane of Naples, whom, of all the bad women of former times, you will probably think of with most horror. Read how she came to give this country to the See of Rome, and how the Popes kept their court there during the celebrated schism, which contributed so much to prepare the minds of men for the reformation : it was a favourite measure with Louis XIV. to take Avignon away from the Pope, whenever he was displeased with the measures of the Court of Rome, and you may perceive in the letters of Madame de Sevigné, how pleased she used to be, that her daughter should act the vice Queen for a time, and that Mons. de Grignan should retrieve his circumstances out of the revenues of the county : read also, if you can, some account of the shocking scenes which took place in this venerable city, and in the neighbourhood, during the fever of the revolution : figure to yourself, too, that it was here that a division of Hannibal's army crossed, whilst the main body amused the simple barbarians about twenty miles lower down, and you will conceive how interesting the view was as we descended the eminence above Villeneuve about an hour before sunset. On our arrival at the side of the river, I was glad to have an opportunity of showing N—, how visibly the sea had retreated from the spot we stood on, for the whole bank had been evidently a bed of oysters.

The inn at Avignon was the best we had ever been in, and the furniture the most splendid : the room we sat in being hung with crimson silk damask, and with curtains of the same materials ; it would have been a good place to have staid a day at, had we not been desirous of overtaking F—, and it was urged to us as an inducement that we might so easily visit Vacluse, a name more familiar to you, I believe, than Jane of Naples ; as I never possessed the Italian language, I can never have been capable of

doing justice to Petrarch, and that, I presume, is the reason why I had no great desire to visit Vacluse. I cannot but believe, too, that this celebrated personage would have been mortified, could he have foreseen the circumstances of his life and writings, which were principally to attract the attention of succeeding ages. His love for Laura seems if not affected at least misplaced ; it by no means contributed to her reputation, and seems to have been fatal to her peace of mind ; and what man really in love, would ever talk of rivulets being stopped by his sighs, or swelled by his tears ? But Petrarch's reputation might stand upon much better ground—he felt for the degradation of the times he lived in, and employed the great influence which the station that he occupied in the opinion of all Europe gave him in reviving a taste for ancient literature ; his letter to Rienzi, too, when at the summit of power at Rome, is excellent, and contains advice which a much greater man of modern times might listen to with advantage.

Orange is a small, but very ancient town, and once distinguished by many monuments of Roman taste and magnificence. Of these there remains but one solitary arch, formerly a gate of the town, perhaps, but in great preservation, and ornamented in a very superior style with naval and military emblems. The common opinion of the country is, that it was a triumphal arch erected in honour of Marius's victory over the Ambrones ; but it is neither probable that such a memorial would have been erected so far from the field of battle, which is known to have been at Aix, or that Marius, or any of his party, could have found architects capable of such a performance. This ancient town was once the capitol of a small principality, and gave a title to one of the branches of the illustrious house of Nassau.

We got to Montelimar on the evening of the 5th of October, exactly one hundred and thirty years to a day, since Madame de Sevigné stopt there for the night, on her way from Grignan : after all you have heard me say in commendation of that celebrated personage, whose letters I have more than once pressed you not only to read, but to study, you will be surprised that I should pass within a few miles of her daughter's residence without going there, and that I should miss an opportunity of contemplating the Royal Castle of the Adhemars, and the town of Grignan, and the grotto of Roche Courbière ; which seemed to be the only thing really admired by Madame de Sevigné, in the whole lordship of Grignan : this grotto was about a mile from the castle, and at the bottom of a small hill where a layer of stone protruded like an enormous canopy over a shady corner of the valley. The stone, which was soft at the bottom of the cliff, had admitted of tables and seats being cut out of it, and

there was the greatest abundance of fine water. I learned, however, that the violence and cruelty of the revolution had been exhibited with every circumstance of impious destruction at Grignan; that the castle had been destroyed, and the burying-place of the family violated; and that the remains of Madame de Sevigné, after having been exposed to public view, had been deprived of the coffin, which was of lead, and of the burial dress, to which some ornaments of silver had been annexed. The celebrated Monsieur de Saussure, who travelled through this country some years ago with his lady, had the satisfaction of passing an evening in the castle of Grignan, and Madame de Saussure found herself, for the night, in possession of Madame de Sevigné's bedchamber.

We stopped for the night at St. Vallier, the master of the house here, who was also a wine-merchant, gave me, in the course of the evening, the information I have just communicated. He inquired with great anxiety if I thought the war would last long. It was a thousand pities, he said, that industrious and quiet people, like himself, should be made to suffer for the quarrels of princes, and told me, with a sigh, of the days he had seen, when English and Russian gentlemen could travel unmolested; how deeply they drank of his wine, and what large orders they had frequently given.

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#### LETTER V.

F——— had left Lyons a day or two before, and, as I found that the person whose protection I had principally depended on for him at Geneva, was not there, we felt the necessity of rendering our stay as short as possible. You must read, in some book of geography, the history of this great city, which is situated at the confluence of two rivers, in a beautiful and fertile country. It carried on an extensive trade, and contained one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants before the revolution. I must refer you to the same source for an account of the various arts and manufactories for which Lyons was distinguished, and for the names and works of the illustrious men which it has produced.

As mercantile opulence was for a time equally the object of persecution in France, with nobility of blood, or sanctity of character, or respectability of profession, the same sad scenes have been acted here as in Bourdeaux. The Lyonese, however, had the energy to take up arms against their tyrants; nor was it until after an honourable defence that they submitted. They bravely

exposed themselves to the dangers of a siege, in defence of their just rights, and when it was no longer possible to resist, they supported, with a patience truly heroic, all the evils that could be heaped upon them by a cruel and rapacious enemy. In their first efforts against the convention, and its agents, they were for a time assisted by the Girondists; nor did their courage fail them, when that celebrated party gave way before the common enemy. Having ventured to punish their tyrant Challier, who was the first victim of his own guillotine, they soon foresaw the vengeance with which they were threatened, and prepared to meet it.

Under all discouragements, and with internal treachery to guard against, was the siege protracted to upwards of two months, until the batteries of the enemy commanded every part of the city, and the daily ration of provisions was reduced to half a pound of bad bread. It then became necessary to surrender at discretion, but their general, the gallant Precy, had made arrangements for forcing his way into Switzerland, at the head of fifteen hundred or two thousand determined followers; many of these were joined by their wives, and some by their parents, whilst others were under the necessity of leaving the tender, helpless objects of their affection, behind them, exposed to the vile passions and savage cruelty of a licentious, unrelenting enemy. Figure to yourself the march of this devoted column from their native city. Gibbon's description of the effort made by a portion of the inhabitants of Damascus, to withdraw themselves from the power of the Saracens, will furnish you with some idea of such a scene, but the exiles of Damascus were more fortunate than those of Lyons. They died upon the spot; for, except a captain, who was spared and dismissed, the Arabs might enjoy the satisfaction, says the historian, of believing, that not a Christian of either sex escaped the edge of their scymeters: the fate of the Lyonese, on the contrary, was but the more cruel in many instances, for being longer protracted, having been compelled, after several severe conflicts, to seek for safety in flight and dispersion, they were encountered by a still worse enemy than the soldier who had routed them; the peasantry of the neighbouring villages had been made to believe, that this poor remnant were aristocrats, loaded with gold, or foreigners, whose object it had been to parcel out the territory of the republic among their different sovereigns; this, with the desire, too natural upon all occasions, of siding with the strongest, was sufficient to put arms into their hands, and steel them against compassion. They way-laid every path, examined every grot and thicket, and proceeded to the deliberate destruction of their former benefactors, as if they had been engaged in a hunting expedition against an inroad of wolves from the mountains. Of the original fifteen hundred or two thou-

sand exiles, not more than one hundred and fifty effected their escape.

We are now, on the thirteenth of October, arrived at the last day's journey, as you must perceive, if you have traced us on the map. It was with mingled sensations that I felt myself approaching Geneva. You know through how many vicissitudes of life I have passed since I lived at Geneva ; a revolution too had taken place there, a sort of sabine marriage with France had been entered into, and I knew that it had been preceded, and in some measure rendered indispensable, by scenes of outrage and of cruelty, to which some of my old acquaintances had fallen victims. We were anxious to see F—— ———, and delightful as the journey had been, were not sorry that it was now drawing fast to a conclusion.

The country continued mountainous after we left Nantua, so that we proceeded slowly, and I foresaw that we should lose that first distant prospect of the lake which I had promised myself so much pleasure from. I was determined, however, not to lose the opportunity of showing my fellow travellers what is called *La Perte du Rhone* ; the river at its confluence with the Arve near Geneva is upwards of seventy yards over, and though augmented by the accession of many smaller streams as it proceeds, is confined in the neighbourhood of *L'Ecluse*, after a course of twenty miles, to a space of not more than three yards. You may judge of the rapidity with which it now foams along, and particularly when the passage becoming still narrower, as in a funnel, is at last reduced to two feet.\* There have been persons who have ventured to stand astride this horrid gulf, which gives me a better idea of a fit descent for a fury to choose, on its way to the infernal shades, than any thing I have seen. I could hardly bear even to peep into it. The violence of the river has here made itself a subterraneous passage, and it is seen to rise about one hundred yards lower down, the very emblem of gentleness itself. A great many experiments have been made with different bodies, but nothing committed to the stream on one side, has ever appeared on the other, of boats which had accidentally been drifted from a distance, not a fragment was ever seen again. A poor hog was once made to undertake the passage, and has, it is to be hoped, found repose in some other world, for he has never since appeared in this. The connexion is in all probability, through winding passages which extend to a great depth. *L'Ecluse*, which is a

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\* The hills in the neighbourhood of the fort de *L'Ecluse* are found to contain great numbers of marine fossils, even the rock in which the Rhone has forced itself a passage, abounds with them, and in particular with a species which has been nowhere discovered in a state of existence but on the coast of Ceylon in the East Indies.



mile or two from the Perte du Rhone, is the place mentioned by Cæsar, as affording one of the few passages out of the country of the Helvetians, and it is impossible for any description to be more exact.

We here entered into what was probably in very remote times the basin of a very great lake, which extended in the opposite direction to the Alps, and which having successively burst itself a passage through different places, of which there are evident marks, is now shrunk to the Lake of Geneva. It was night by the time we got into the neighbourhood of the city; I could still however, recognize several buildings, which I saw and knew exactly where I was. A little before eight we arrived at Secheron, which is on the banks of the lake, about a quarter of a mile from the gates, and had the happiness to find F——— waiting for us. He was a little disfigured by a large cravat and a long coat, but otherwise improved in his looks, and in perfect health. And, now dear daughter, adieu, you have had a faithful account of our expedition so far, and may rely upon my continuing to make you acquainted with every thing that can interest you in our circumstances and situation. We shall make some excursions, and I shall have a great deal to say about Geneva, which is to be our home for some time.

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## LETTER VI.

*St. Jean, 1st May.*

Six happy months have passed at Geneva, as happy at least as can well be in a world, where, with the most reasonable intentions, and the most moderate views, we are still liable to disappointments, and where the possession of all that can render life desirable, still leaves us exposed to the infirmities of human nature.

The Inn at Secheron is large and commodious, and has a garden, which leads down to the lake. It was at no late hour of the next day, after our arrival, as you may suppose, that I walked along this slope, and leaning on the low wall which serves as a barrier against the water, surveyed the interesting scene before me. The map of Switzerland, which, I take for granted, is now spread on your table, exhibits the Lake of Geneva as approaching in some degree the shape of a crescent. It is formed, as you may perceive, by the Rhone, which enters violently with its turbid waters at one extremity, fills an immense basin of sixty miles in length, by about ten in the widest part in breadth, and having divested itself of all impurities, re-assumes, as by a sort

of resurrection, in the shape of a clear and unpolluted stream, its course towards the Mediterranean : though far inferior in point of size to the lakes of America, and by no means dignified, as they are, with the appearance of vessels large enough for all the purposes of extensive commerce, armed occasionally for war, and navigated as on the ocean, it is still an important and an interesting object. I will say nothing to you, at present, of the people who inhabit its shores, nor of the birds which are found upon its banks, nor of the fish which it produces, nor of the storms which it is sometimes agitated by, nor of its frightful depth : figure to yourself, that I was looking down upon it from a terrace, where the breadth is contracted to about a mile ; on the left, was an expanse, which appeared as an arm of the sea, not unlike the Sound between Long Island and the Connecticut shore ; to the right, was the ancient and venerable city of Geneva as if rising from the bosom of the water, a city so long the seat of liberty, and still the seat of literature, and to me so replete with remembrance of my younger days ; and before me on the opposite side, was a shore covered with country seats, in the midst of orchards and vineyards, rising by a gentle swell into mountains ; the forms of which were as familiar to my mind as the features of a long-lost friend ; and over these, at a distance, were the snows of the lofty Alps, and above these was Mont Blanc.

I shall have occasion hereafter to enter into a more particular description of this mighty mountain, and shall be able to do so the more correctly, from its having been so generally an object of attention. It attracted, in a very particular degree, that of the celebrated Monsieur de Saussure, who, after repeated attempts, was, at length, so fortunate as to reach the summit of the mountain, and to feel himself for a time, on the most elevated spot of all Europe, at the distance of nearly three miles perpendicular from the surface of the sea, or twelve thousand one hundred and seventy-two feet above the village at its base. It happens to very few individuals that they are able to return after a lapse of so many years, and from so distant a spot of the earth, to the scenes of their early youth, and the satisfaction arising from such an event in my life was accompanied with the agreeable circumstance of having so much of my family with me, and with the reflection, that health and amusement, and the means of a liberal education, were here to be found united in one spot.

The next day was employed in looking out for apartments, which, with the assistance of an old friend, were very soon procured, and at no great expense ; but as some days would unavoidably intervene, before we could be put in possession of them, we thought it would be best to employ the interval in making an

excursion to the extremity of the lake. On the eighteenth of October, therefore, we set out, in a hired carriage, and moved slowly along the banks of the lake, into the Pays de Vaud. In the little space of the three or four first miles, there occurred many interesting recollections. We first passed at the foot of the hill of Chambeisi, where I lived a year in company with my friend Muller, now a distinguished name in Germany, and in sight of an old family mansion, where I remembered having been kindly and hospitably received; the master and mistress of the house are no longer living, but I had the satisfaction to learn that their place in society has been worthily supplied by several families of their descendants. We, shortly after, passed in sight of the village of Genthod, where Muller and I resided a year, and found ourselves blest in the protection, the instruction, and the example of Mr. Bonnet, whose goodness of heart, and mildness of disposition, gained him as many friends, as his extensive erudition, and his various literary productions, created admirers. Monsieur and Madame Bonnet have been dead for some years, but their names will live for ever; as long at least as wisdom and virtue are in esteem, or science continues to be revered. The works by which Monsieur Bonnet was first known, were on topics of natural history, the reproduction of plants and animals, the use of leaves to trees, (a subject connected with some of the most important experiments on the nature of the atmosphere we breathe) and on the private economy of insects, either living singly, or in a species of commonwealth: nor is his manner on these seemingly less important subjects, less captivating, than when he draws the attention of his reader to those of an higher order. An animal-cule swimming in a drop of water, and forming a vortex to collect its prey, as a whale might do in an arm of the sea.—A spider, bearing about her future offspring in the shape of eggs contained in a bag, encountering every sort of danger and death itself in defence of this precious bag, and becoming at the birth of her young, the first victim of their cruel voracity. A caterpillar, furnished by nature with the same means of tracing its way home, after a distant excursion, as love placed in the hands of Theseus when he entered the labyrinth, are rendered the objects almost of our regard. You may conceive, too, how interesting a description of the course of nature becomes in the hands of Mr. Bonnet, when he relates those wonderful reproductions from mutilated animals, and the multiplications of the polypus, and the sagacity of the ant-lion, who with two sharp horns, twelve eyes, and a coat of mail, lurks concealed at the bottom of a pit, and wants nothing but size to render him the terror of all mankind.

You are acquainted with Lausanne by description; but no de-

scription can give you an adequate idea of the extreme beauty of the country, which, rising into irregularly broken hills, with the appearance, upon a great scale, of the ocean, when after a storm, the wind has suddenly shifted, is, every spot of it, under the highest cultivation. It was here that the celebrated Mr. Gibbon passed seven or eight happy years of his life, in the composition of a work which gave him fame and fortune, and in the enjoyment of the sort of society he preferred to all others. See an account of his house and gardens, in one of the volumes of his posthumous works. As we walked upon what was formerly his terrace, the garden appeared inferior to the account he gives of it : but the vineyards, inclining by a rapid slope towards the lake, and the elegant and comfortable seats and farm-houses without number, and the lake itself, now at its broadest, and the opposite shore, would require a pen superior even to that of Mr. Gibbon.

Along the wall of the terrace we saw preserved in earthen pots, many of the common plants of our country, which, whatever we may think of them, are treated here like strangers of distinction ; there was a small pride of India, about three feet high, and a little calico tree, and a plant of the prickly pear, and a dwarf of palmetto, which placed as curiosities, in finely varnished vases, and called by their botanic names, put me very much in mind of Tom Errand in one of Farquhar's plays, who is disguised in beau Clincher's clothes.

The novel of Rousseau has spread a charm over the country between Lausanne and Vevay, and by Clarens to the castle of Chillon ; and surely never was there a scene so worthy the highly descriptive powers of such a writer. The vineyards rise by terraces one above the other to the summit of the hills on one side of the road, and end only at the edge of the water on the other, and the houses bespeak that just degree of opulence, which supposes some remains of former simplicity. In addition to these beauties of art and nature, it was now the midst of vintage, the fields and the roads were filled with people of all ages, gathering or carrying, or pressing grapes, and all, that could delight the eye or gladden the heart of man, seemed assembled in one spot. Vevay is a pretty little town which you will find well described in twenty books of travels ; but Clarens seems too small a place to have been dignified with the birth and residence of Julia. There are some remains of ancient castles ; but I did not see a single house, where I could suppose Mons. de Wolmar to have lived, nor any thing worthy of the description which St. Preux gives of the garden and pleasure grounds. A little farther stands Chillon, where the fatal accident is supposed to have happened. This ancient castle, flanked with four gloomy towers, is built on a rock, which projects into the Lake, and which, were the water with-

drawn by some such convulsion of nature, as we every day see the effects of, would hang over a most frightful precipice. No length of line, which could ever be commanded at the spot, has proved sufficient to reach the bottom.

We walked about the castle for some time, and then went down into what was the dungeon of former days. It is considerably below the surface of the lake, and has a most dungeon-like appearance; no wretch has pined there for the last century, but there remains the very ring to which Bonnivard\* was chained, and which confined all his movements to a half circle of a few feet, for seven years. He was a Genevan, who had ventured to oppose the pretensions of the Duke of Savoy, and his patriotism brought down upon him the heavy doom of perpetual captivity in this dismal place; but the forces of Berne drove off those of the Duke, took possession of the castle, and liberated the poor Genevan: we may, in some measure, conceive his feelings, when the noise of his liberators passing over the drawbridge, was heard below; and if you wish to be still more strongly impressed with the ideas, natural upon such an occasion, read Madame de Genlis's description of the Duchess of C..... You cannot have forgotten her long confinement, and the interesting account she is made to give of it.

Having embarked at Chillon, we coasted along the extremity of the lake, passed through the turbid stream of the Rhone, and landed at a solitary house at the foot of the steep rock, which overhangs the lake, and which takes its name from the neighbouring village of Milleraï. We were now in the republic of the Vallais, which is spread along the sides of the Rhone, as that of the Grisons is along the Rhine. It is worth your attention to observe on the map how nearly the sources of these two great rivers approach, and what different directions they afterwards take. Not far from them rises a third mighty river, the Danube, which has kingdoms and nations of its own to visit in another direction. Observe the various courses of these kindred waters, mingling at last in the great Atlantic, like children of the same family, leaving the paternal mansion at an early age, following their various pursuits in life, and never meeting but in eternity.

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\* It is not without regret that I have lately seen the flowers of poetry, to which fiction so naturally lends itself, scattered over the story of Bonnivard. Such ornaments, even from such a hand, are injurious to the dignity of historic truth. Nor should the Catholic priesthood lose the honours, which it derives from the noble effects of Bonnivard, who was no martyr to Protestantism, but a priest, and a man of letters. At his return to Geneva he found the reformation nearly accomplished, and it was by his persuasion, that the government allowed a further time to all such as could not immediately decide between the two religions. He was soon, as it may be supposed, converted to the protestant religion. The fact is, that there was no safety for him out of Geneva.

The goitre or swelling of the throat, which has always been peculiar to the Alps, is very frequent in this country. It sometimes attains to a monstrous size, and then occasions imbecility; it is attributed to the vitiated and relaxing air of the deep, unventilated valleys; but, what is singular, there are very frequent instances of it at Geneva, where many a pretty woman turns pale, as she measures her throat of a morning.

The people of the neighbouring mountains, who live on the very brink of the most unwholesome valleys of the Vallais, are an active, healthy race, who pass their days in a comfortable ignorance. Frugality is a virtue of very common growth among them, particularly in the Italian Alps, where coarse rye bread, baked twice a year, a bowl of milk, and garlick, with now and then, upon particular occasions, a little dried cow beef, or goat's flesh, satisfies all their wants, and completes the circle of their enjoyments. I have seen the father of a family at Macugnaga, says Monsieur de Saussure, go gravely to his cupboard of an evening, and return from it, after having carefully put the key into his pocket, with a handful of garlic, which he distributed, clove by clove, to his wife and children; and this was all the seasoning their appetite rendered necessary to a morsel of dark bread, which was to be bruised between two stones before they could eat it. But, what will surprize you still more, he says that the people of this country, who occasionally have descended into the plain, and tasted the luxury of the lower world, snatch every moment that they can to enjoy their native Alps again, and never leave their garlick and their hard rye bread, without tears of regret.

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#### LETTER VII.

As I may not again have occasion to mention the Vallais to you, I may as well give you some account of that country now, and of the people who inhabit it, in addition to the information which you will find in different books of travels. The extreme length of the valley of the Rhone, which forms by far the greater part of the Vallaisan territory, is one hundred and twenty miles, and its greatest breadth about thirty; and there are several narrow recesses which lose themselves in the neighbouring mountains: there is no where a more strongly marked variety of soil and climate to be met with, than in the Vallais. To fertile fields succeed uncultivated deserts, and mountains covered with eternal snow overhang those valleys, where one experiences all the evils of heat and moisture, and stagnated air. Their intercourse with the rest of the world, except by the valley of the Rhone, is at all times diffi-

cult, and in winter rendered nearly impracticable by the fall of snow ; so that they have remained longer than the rest of Europe in the darkness of the middle ages, and have universally incurred the imputation of ignorance, laziness, and superstition. The upper Vallais, which was divided into seven communities, each possessing a portion of independent sovereignty, not unlike that of our states in America, and represented in the sovereign council or congress, became proprietors of the lower Vallais by right of conquest, in a war against the Duke of Burgundy in the year one thousand four hundred and seventy-six. Had they now admitted their neighbours to a fair participation of rights, and not preferred the illiberal advantage of governing as subjects, those whom they ought to have embraced as brethren, it is probable that their remote situation, the poverty of their country, their inoffensive politics, and the facility with which they might have gratified France in granting a passage through their territory into Italy, would have insured their tranquillity. There is no arguing, I confess, on the probable conduct of the directory of the French republic ; but the plausible pretext of liberating the oppressed would not have been afforded them. Berne was taken in March, ninety-eight, and the people of the upper Vallais were shortly after made to understand, that they must free their subjects from their allegiance, and admit them to the equal enjoyment of every civil and political privilege. To this, though with some degree of reluctance, they consented ; and the new election districts had been already marked out, and every preparatory measure taken for the important change, when there came a new order from the directory, that the Vallais was no longer to be considered as an independent state, but as a department of the new Helvetic government, which had lately been established upon the ruins of the Swiss aristocracy. The whole of the upper Vallais flew to arms upon this indignity being offered them ; nor did they yield until all the powers of resistance had been exhausted in a succession of bloody actions, in which their towns and villages were taken by storm, their property destroyed, and the persons of the more helpless part of the community treated with a degree of atrocity that human nature recoils from a description of. They have since, after another ineffectual effort, in eighteen hundred and one, and after undergoing every degree of oppression rather than request a union with France, been restored to a sort of mutilated independence, which leaves them like shipwrecked passengers upon a desert shore. The new road, which is connected with Geneva on the one side, and with the Italian republic over the Simplon on the other, was carried on with very little attention to the comforts of these poor Vallaisans. It is, by all accounts, a stupendous work, and will save the exertions of future Hannibals and

Buonapartes ; but if the tide of power should ever set in a different direction ; if some great potentate should ever spring up to the south of the Alps, and Italy be once more enabled, as in the time of the Romans, to avenge the insults and injuries which have been heaped up without mercy upon its ill-fated inhabitants, good policy and self-defence may require, that this easy access to France should be stopped up again.\*

On our return from the rocks of Meillerai to Vevay, and about midway where St. Preux may be supposed to have been, when a fit of despair had almost got the better of him, the wind headed us, and the lake rose in gentle waves so as to give a representation in miniature of the appearance we had so lately been familiar with. I felt no temptation however to jump overboard with any body in my arms ; but waited patiently, assisting sometimes at an oar, sometimes at the helm, until we ran into a cove between Clarens and Vevay, and landed in the midst of a scene of labourers and sun-burnt maidens. You may now transport yourself back again to Secheron, observing, however, as you pass, how visibly the lake has retired from its former boundaries, which may be traced by the accumulation of pudding stone, several feet above the present road, and deposited horizontally ; and how regularly the Jura, like an immense wall, shuts in the prospect from the fort de l'Ecluse behind Rolle, where it begins to take a western direction, leaving that opening, through which, in all probability, the waters flowed in former times towards the lake of Yverdun.

The same sort of cultivation which prevails near Vevay, is to be found on the whole of the way to Geneva, and seems particularly well understood, and particularly profitable in the district of la Cote, which is a ramification of Jura, and presents an appearance, not unlike that of the south-west mountains in Albemarle. The Jura reminded me of the Blue Ridge, which it resembles very much, except that it is considerably higher. There is a small portion of it immediately behind Nyon, which deserves your attention. It is where a smaller mountain, known by the name of the Dole, rises above the general level and diversifies the scene. There is a plain on the top of it of small extent, but much visited by strangers, who are desirous of enjoying one of the most sublime of all prospects. It is there that the shepherds and labourers of the neighbourhood meet by immemorial custom on the two first Sundays of August in every year. The best of every thing that the mountain dairies can produce, is for the occasion, and every

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\* The approach of the Austrian army, which, by its movements in the year 1815, contributed so much to the downfall of Buonaparte, was very much facilitated by this road.



sort of rural game contributes to make their time pass away delightfully. One may, without any great effort of imagination, suppose what are the topics of conversation among such a group of rustics, as they look about them from this elevated spot, of nearly a mile in perpendicular height above the country below. Their own fields and villages are at their feet ; the larger towns of the Pays de Vaud are conspicuous ; the Alps terminate the view on one side, and, losing itself in the Alps, is seen the road to Rome ; Rome, the great fountain of indulgencies and dispensations, and always, in some way or other, the seat of empire ; the lakes of Geneva and of Yverdon, are spread out in all their grandeur and magnificence of surrounding scenery ; that of Anecy in Savoy appears at a distance, and that of Joux seems bosomed in a deep vale, for ages, according to tradition, the favourite seat of innocence and simplicity ; whilst a glimpse of that of Morat suggests to some grey-haired peasant, that he has heard of a famous battle fought upon its banks in days of yore, when the Swiss were men indeed, and would admit of no degrading medium between liberty and death.

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#### LETTER IX.

Of all the subject countries, the Pays de Vaud, which belonged chiefly to the Canton of Berne, has at all times attracted the greatest attention ; it is thickly inhabited, cultivated to the utmost, and adorned by the hand of nature with almost profuse magnificence. If ever the requisites of happiness existed on earth, they were certainly to be found in this fine country, where peace and plenty, good air, agreeable prospects, literature, and the charms of society, were to be enjoyed under the protection of a mild, paternal government.

The neighbouring lake, (which has attracted the curiosity of travellers far more, I believe, than the singular government of this little state, in which Protestant subjects lived happily under a Roman Catholic Sovereign) is about nine miles long and three broad, and its greatest depth is 235 feet. About midway is the Island of St. Pierre, which, in the very diminutive circumference of a mile and a half, incloses a choice of wild and cultivated prospects. There are vineyards, shady groves, corn lands, and pasture ; and there is a little harbour for the protection of boats, which keep up the communication with the main ; and there is the greatest variety of the finest fish. It is a little world of itself, in short, and I regret that poor Rousseau was not allowed to remain there,

Another republic, whose fate will interest you, was Mulhausen, which consisted of one flourishing town of a few villages, and of about eighteen miles square, of fertile territory, upon the river Idd, in Alsace. This little state was in alliance with Switzerland, and exhibited in its government a happy mixture of aristocracy and democracy. It had been proposed to this happy, inoffensive people, at a very early period of the revolution, to unite themselves with France, and upon their refusal, their territory had been taken possession of, and their city rigorously blockaded, so as to prevent all egress, and all communication with the adjacent country. The blockade lasted for two years; nor did the citizens of Mulhausen submit to be incorporated with France, until they had consumed the last day's ration of provisions which the town afforded; these they had scrupulously shared, and used in the most rigorously economical manner, and as they had long been without fuel, almost every article of furniture was converted to that use. It was a most affecting sight, to perceive the people of Mulhausen bring out their furniture into the public square, and share it with their fellow citizens, that all might have the means of preparing the small pittance of a meal that they allowed themselves.

Gersaw, and the valley of Urzeren, states very little known, though they have not escaped the attention of the venerable President Adams, one of the fathers of our country, in his elaborate defence of the American Government. The valley of Urzeren is about nine miles long and three broad, and is situated in the very bosom of the highest Alps. There is no entry for a horseman into it, but along a narrow and dark passage, formed by manual labour, through a rock eighty feet thick; nor any access for a man on foot, but by narrow paths and defiles, where a guide is necessary at almost every step. The traveller, who arrives in this peaceful and happy valley, by either way, is astonished to find the Russ, a river so violent and impetuous elsewhere, here converted into a gentle and pastoral stream, gliding smoothly through a fine meadow, and three or four pretty villages, and a Hospice, or house of hospitality for travellers, who are about crossing, or have crossed, the St. Gothard. It had pleased Heaven to give these interesting people neither power nor riches, but the means of acquiring, by their industry, all that the sober wants of nature require, and as much civil and political liberty as they had the good sense to be satisfied with.

Gersaw was perhaps the smallest republic in Europe; the whole territory being but six miles long and three broad. It had been for some centuries, however, in the undisputed possession of the most perfect independence, being no other way connected

even with the Helvetic Union, than by a defensive alliance, according to which, their quota of troops in time of war, was an hundred men. This diminutive republic, as President Adams observes, had its different councils and tribunals, all emanating from the assembly of the nation, and was careful that too much power should not be lodged in the same hands, or too many employments in one family ; reminding us, if you please, of the animalcule of infusion making a vortex by its motions, to absorb its prey, but still commanding our respect. I once went some miles out of my way, to lodge a night in the little village which is the capital of Gersaw, and had my horse shod by the President, or Landamman, as he is termed, in the language of the country. It appears that there never was a single instance of capital punishment in the republic.

The last of October found us fixed at Geneva, on the first floor of a house in the *grande Rue*, and we began to mix a little in the world.

It would be useless to describe the situation of Geneva, which you ought to know from Moore and Coxe, as well almost as if you had been there. There are indeed but few cities in Europe, which attracted such general attention, and not one more deserving of it. A little republic, in which the departments of government were wisely and distinctly ascertained, with no more of democracy than was necessary to maintain the privileges and support the consequence of the people ; with no other aristocracy, than that of talents and hereditary virtue, and with such a portion of monarchy as gave vigour to the law, but which the nation could at any time re-assume. Such a republic was very naturally an object of general regard : and, that the semblance to the commonwealths of former times might be yet more perfect, there was a little army kept up for the defence of the state ; there was a subject territory, once the property of the church or the fruit of former wars, which was to be governed by proconsuls, sent out for that purpose from the capital ; there had been more than one civil war, and several revolutions.

What nature has done for this highly-favoured spot still remains of course ; and travellers will, to the end of time, admire the noble lake, the clear, the azure-coloured rapid river, the amphitheatre of gentle hills, and the contrast of variegated vegetation, with the perpetual snow of the neighbouring Alps. But the efforts of wisdom and virtue are far less durable : still, however, there is something left of former times even in a moral point of view ; and, as in the remains of ancient temples, the foundations may still be traced, and here and there an isolated column may still command our admiration, long after the superstructure has been swept away ; so in Geneva, though their inde-

pendence has been torn from them, though their commercial opulence has vanished, and their manufactures have fallen to decay, yet their system of education, the basis of all their former happiness, remains. Their manners are pleasing, their taste in literature is correct, and their morals are still good. It is indeed wonderful how so much remains of what Geneva was, and how under so many losses, and such humiliations, they still preserve a degree of apparent independence, a decent exterior of comfortable circumstances, and such good spirits. They now feel the advantage of the sumptuary laws, which they had began to complain of, and which brought them acquainted with those habits of decent economy that must now be practised from necessity. It is from this circumstance that a stranger, who returns to Geneva after an absence of many years, finds the place and the people more exactly the same than he could have supposed possible.

To fill the various civil, ecclesiastic, or literary offices of the republic; to be a member of some one of the councils; to be in the executive or judiciary departments; to close a military life in foreign service, by holding a commission in the army of the state, were all objects of honourable ambition, which encouraged the liberal policy of the father in giving a good education, and incited the application of the son. These objects no longer exist, but the precious habit remains; and no change in the article of literary attainments is as yet perceivable, or in the conversation and general appearance of the superior orders of society. But the people of the inferior class, the tradesman, the manufacturer, and the small shopkeeper, have suffered by the loss of that spark of patriotism, that dignified sense of their own importance, which raised them above the paltry arts of gain, consoled them for the inequalities of fortune, and made them proud to vindicate their title of citizens of Geneva in foreign countries. Once a year at least, when assembled in the great council of the nation, they heard themselves addressed as sovereign Lords, and the Bourgeois, with his sword by his side, and his hat on, might perceive that every magistrate bowed before him and solicited his approbation, whose shoes he had made, or whose coat he had carried home that very morning.

You would admire the gentleness with which their schools are conducted, and how powerfully the scholar's mind is incited by a much better cause than the fear of blows; there are public examinations in all of them, and nothing is omitted, which can give importance to the prizes that are distributed on those occasions. The examination which a schoolboy or student undergoes, is an epoch of no small importance in the family; his parents think of little else for some days, but of the appearance he will make, or of the glory he has gained; his little brothers and sis-

ters are deeply interested in the event, and the very servant-maid, who waits at supper, is proud of his success. The education of the daughters is equally well attended to, with this difference, that it is never but in a very small degree public, and is confined to modern literature, and to the more elegant accomplishments, among which the making of artificial flowers, cutting paper for profiles, and some other as trifling accomplishments, are frequently included. Religious instruction, very properly, also occupies a portion of time of both sexes, as preparatory to the first communion. All are passionately fond of dancing, and their parents indulge them in that, and in every other amusement, suitable to their age ; so that one can no where meet with a more general appearance of happiness than here. Mahomet may have been right in placing the paradise of sensual man in fragrant bowers, by the side of purling streams, and amid never-fading beauties ; but we may say without exaggeration, that heaven has placed a paradise for the young and innocent in Geneva.

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#### LETTER X.

As you have Dr. Moore's travels upon the shelves of your book-case, you may now turn to what he says of Geneva, and observe, in particular, his description of the Sunday-night societies, into which the whole town, and particularly the female part of it, is divided; from the opulent matron of seventy, to the little seamstress, who trips along in her spencer, with her reticle suspended from her arm, and the profits of many a week's labour bestowed upon some ornament on her person.

If a society becomes by the admission of new members at length too numerous to meet any longer with conveniency, it is either dissolved, or it is separated into two or more portions, each of which, like the parts of the polypus, shoots out a new head, and becomes a perfect society. The boys have also their societies ; and when of a proper age, and on certain conditions, are admitted into those of the young ladies.

The men of an advanced age have their circles, where, "wise through time, and narrative through age," they meet, and regulate the affairs of Europe, or descending into the garden, if the circle is provided with one, those who have some smack of youth play at bowls, others look on, and others again lean on the wall, and bask before the sun.

There are also family societies, in which on certain days, and generally once a week, the old and the young of one connexion meet ; a custom of all others I admire, and which is particularly

essential here, where the different ages are so much, upon all other occasions, in the habit of living or of at best passing their time apart from each other.

It is a pity, that with all their good sense, the people of Geneva should have suffered the very trifling circumstance of living on the hill, or at the foot of it, to be a source of odious distinction, and that from this, or some other such imaginary scale of rank in society, there should have sprung a degree of animosity, which has been more than once attended with very serious consequences.

But I can conceive your impatience all this time to know what I think of the ladies of Geneva, and that you have as many questions to ask upon the occasion as Mrs. Tabitha Bramble put to Captain Lismihago. I cannot, however, you should recollect, be supposed to be half as well informed as the Captain was; for it has been by no means my fate to be as well circumstanced for that purpose. I can tell you, however, that there are few that can be called handsome, but numbers who have an animated, pleasing, cheerful air, and something better than beauty in their faces. They are generally below your size; wear rouge universally after marriage, but so as to imitate nature; and dress themselves to advantage. If I might venture, however, to make an observation on their appearance in public, it would be to regret that they attach so much importance to a certain fulness of form about the bosom. And though they deserve our thanks, no doubt, as Addison some where says of the ladies in his time, for the courage with which they brave the inclemency of the weather, in order to give us a sample of their beautiful persons, yet it is surprising that they should be led, by the influence of fashion, to adopt a style of dress so much at variance with that great attention to decorum which so generally distinguishes them.

As they are well and virtuously brought up, we may presume that they make good wives; there is no where, indeed, a greater appearance of domestic happiness than at Geneva; and the inhabitants still retain the very pretty custom of annexing the wife's name to the husband's. In a place where science is so diffused, and men of learning are at the same time men of the world, the conversation of the ladies naturally assume more of a scientific turn than with us in America; and society, so far, gains by it. But I could have wished that somewhat more of ancient simplicity had been retained, and that a certain softness of phrase, and extreme gentleness of manners, had never been adopted.

You may have formed an idea of these beautiful environs from books of travels, and from what I have attempted to describe to you; but the view is in several instances rendered far more interesting by some knowledge of the events which a particular spot has been the

scene of in former times. I never saw the young people of the city collected in groups, during the summer, of a Sunday afternoon, on the edge of the opposite hill of La Batie, or appearing and vanishing again, like imaginary beings among the trees, but I derived an additional satisfaction from beholding, at the same time, the ruins of the neighbouring fort, which was so long the torment of their ancestors.

It is agreeable too to see Lancy, once a place of rendezvous for the banditti enemy of the neighbourhood, and subjected as such to the midnight horrors of military execution, now the undisturbed residence of a race of peaceful Spanish sheep; and, when worried and questioned by the custom-house officers at the little village of Versoi, one remembers with a sort of satisfaction that this very Versoi was taken by storm some two hundred years ago.

But the military honours of Geneva have rapidly faded away; the anniversary of the Escalade is scarcely remembered; the trophies of that memorable night no longer excite the patriotism of the citizens; and the arquebusiers, the artillerists, and the bombardiers, so renowned in former times, are now confounded in one general mass of peaceable French subjects.

The Genevans are very fond of society, and besides their regular meetings, which I have described to you, there are frequent tea-parties given by the ladies, who invite, on such occasions, as many of their own sex as they have chairs for, besides as many men as they can collect: these last are seen huddled up together in the midst of the room, a few more fortunate than the rest, à l'Anglaise, upon the hearth, whilst the ladies describe a formal segment of a circle, and one universal buzz, I had almost said uproar, of conversation is kept up. At a certain period of the evening, which varies according to the more or less fashionable ton of the house, two or three servants appear bringing in a table, which at first sight looks like a moveable altar, but is found covered with preparations for making tea, with all its accompaniments, which are here far more extensive than with us. The cups, and various sorts of cakes and pastry, are now handed about, and the uproar of conversation continues; uproar is too strong an expression, I confess; but the noise is something very like it, though attended, it must be observed, with politeness, and with great good humour.

To the tea-equipage succeeds as many card tables, as the company may require, and the genius and knowledge of the lady of the house is displayed in placing those together, who prefer each others company, and in making them play at the game they like best. Good order and silence now succeed (as when the distinct

elements sprung up out of chaos) to the confusion of the moment before, and the company seem shrunk to a diminished size, which would remind you of Milton's Pandemonium, and of the miracle that took place there. It has made me sorry upon such occasions to see a delicate and pretty woman toiling through a numerous company, with a pack of cards in her hands, inviting some, and soliciting or commanding others, to draw a card, and to take their places; but it has been afterwards consoling to behold her resting from her labours, as she sat with self-complacency, surveying the various groups she had so skilfully arranged. Buonaparte, reviewing his army, after they had crossed the Alps, could hardly have been more gratified.

Of public amusements there are but few; there is a play-house, indeed, but it is not much frequented, and there are now and then private concerts; but music, though executed, I believe, to perfection, is not such as I expected to find it. Like stage-dancing, it seems rather an exertion of skill than of taste, and is very remote from conveying any expression that I can give a name to. My means of observation have been, indeed, very much circumscribed as yet, and I may think differently when I get to Paris.

There are private balls, also, from time to time, (for dancing is a very favourite amusement) and it would be very agreeable to be present at them, were they not so crowded; but one would think, that every body here were of Miss Larolle's opinion, when she talks with delight of having been so squeezed at a ball, that she could hardly breathe.

The city having been for ages circumscribed by fortifications, has never been susceptible of much augmentation, and the houses are, consequently, not in proportion to the number of inhabitants. Many families, therefore, are compelled to reside under the same roof; a circumstance which by no means promotes either cleanliness or comfort. It is owing to this, no doubt, as well as to the beauty of the surrounding country, that so many of the families of Geneva pass their summer out of town. Their country-houses are generally large and handsome, and though a proper taste for ornamental gardening does not prevail, yet vineyards and wheat fields on a slope, terminated by water, and by a distant view of lofty mountains, are, in themselves, such beautiful appendages, that if you imagined these interspersed with comfortable houses, where the delight of shade is generally secured, you may suppose, with truth, that it would be difficult to find here what would not any where else be called a pretty place.

Mountains are every where, I think, agreeable to the sight; they have been, in so many instances, the asylum of civil and religious liberty, and are so generally the abode of health and



strength. To be habitable, however, they ought not, it seems, to exceed a certain height; for if the air in low places is rendered unwholesome by certain gaseous substances, which are peculiar to such situations, there are others again of a different nature, which rise to the upper regions of the atmosphere, and render it unfit for respiration. The conclusion of Mr. de Saussure, in which there is, perhaps, as much of the Genevois as of the natural philosopher, is, that the atmosphere most conducive to good health, and to longevity, is to be found at the distance of between 12 and 1800 feet from the level of the sea. The mountains near Geneva are cultivated to as great a height as the soil will admit of; they form a field of observation to the botanist and natural philosopher; they are replete with evidences of those great operations of nature, which carry the mind up to periods the most remote in the history of the globe; and they afford a retreat during the summer to a nation of herdsmen, who, lost to all the knowledge of what is going on in the world, confine their attention to their cattle and to the making of cheese.

As the houses of Geneva are crowded with inhabitants, the streets are dirty, without any side pavement, and in general too steep for pleasurable exercise. The taste for passing the summer in the country is very prevalent, and we, among the rest, began, at a very early period of the spring, to look out for a retreat. The difficulty was to determine upon a choice in the number that were offered, and we at last fixed upon the *Maison Constant* at St. Jean, near the confluence of the Arve and Rhone, which we got furnished, at the rate of sixty pounds a year. The house is roomy and convenient; and three or four steps lead from the drawing room to the terrace, which is upwards of 100 yards long, and broad in proportion, and planted with double rows of lofty trees, which afforded shade at every hour of the day, and are so arranged as to leave intervals at either extremity and in front for one of the most beautiful and diversified prospects in the world. The slope in front, which might almost be called a precipice, leaves room for a narrow strip of vineyard, and then succeeds the broad, azure-coloured, rapid stream of the Rhone. A garden tract of 60 or 70 acres of rich soil, bounded by the Arve, and visibly the deposit of the waters in former times, next presents itself, in all the lively beauty of variegated vegetation; and the view is afterwards carried over fertile fields and vineyards, and farm-houses and villages, till it is terminated, at no great distance, by the mountain of Saleve. To the left the city presents itself in one of the best points of view, at a distance of little more than half a mile; on one side of it is a glimpse of the lake, and above it, at a distance, are cultivated hills, where I often admire the unusual reunion of all that bespeaks plenty and population, with that sort

of comfortable retirement from which it might be delightful to survey the world. On the other side is seen the Buët, one of the loftiest of the Alps, and next to it is the commencement of those masses of granite which are connected with Mont Blanc. From the right of the terrace, the view would remind you of those sudden turns in the North River, where the waters appear to have burst a passage. The banks are lofty and steep, and the Rhone receives the accession of the Arve, which, white with pulverised rock from the mountain, seems at first repulsed, as a rough and ill-bred country squire might be by some beauty of polished manners and better education. But great is the power of perseverance ; those turbid waters which at first make scarcely any impression on the Rhone, are very soon in possession of half the space, from bank to bank, and shortly after, from the change of colour, which is evident, they seem in possession of the whole.

The estate annexed to the *Maison Constant*, is a very small one, and in the hands of a farmer who pays thirty Louis for about twelve English acres, with a small dwelling house and out-houses. From two poses, or 58,254 square feet (English) of vineyard, he has, this year, made seven chars, or 5600 quarts, nearly thirteen pipes of English measure. The wine is but of an ordinary quality, and from the abundant vintage, all over the country, would not sell, at present, for more than 3*l.* the char. Such land is supposed to be worth about 8*l.* the acre ; below the house is another small estate, with a vineyard and a garden, at the foot of which runs the Rhone.

Before the reformation, there was a nunnery on the spot, the church was dedicated to St. Jean, which has given its name to the whole neighbourhood. The garden tract, on the opposite side, reminds me a little of our rice fields ; it is cultivated to the utmost advantage, and watered by means of wheels, which, having buckets fixed to the rim of the circumference, and being set in motion by the current, are seen dipping up, and pouring out, alternatively, the water in the manner of the elevators in our rice mills. The water is received in a trough properly placed for the purpose, and is conducted where it is required.

Before I say any thing to you of our excursions, I must bring you acquainted with some of the persons whom I saw there last winter. It is, perhaps, the principal advantage arising from a residence in large towns, that we are able to intermix in society, with those from whose conversation we derive amusement or instruction, in a sort of momentary acquaintance. It is agreeable to find ourselves in the same circle with a person who has lately navigated the Euxine, or who is just from Moscow, or who has served in Egypt, or who has distinguished himself in the literary world, or by some useful improvement in the arts, and to return

home late in the evening, as from a play, where we have seen a number of interesting characters taken from life, and well represented.

Mr. Necker has, for two or three years past, resided in Geneva during the winter, and whose acquaintance I was, in some measure, able to cultivate. Mr. Necker was the son of respectable parents, who, by giving him a good education, and early habits of industry, gave him what was better than fortune. His established reputation as a man of talents, his great success as a banker, his good name and extensive credit, recommended him to the notice of the French government, as likely to assist in restoring some order to their miserably mismanaged finances. The effect of his first operations, in simplifying and consequently rendering less expensive, the collection of the public revenue, was soon evident and universally applauded; but when he had prevailed upon the king to suspend, to the end of every year, the distribution of pecuniary gratifications, without binding himself in the interval by any promise, and had destroyed a labyrinth of abuses, all arising in the first instance from the good nature of the unfortunate monarch, who knew not how to reject or to refuse his merit, he was soon attacked, and his conduct vilified, by a whole host of foes, among whom were some of the most exalted personages of the kingdom. It was in vain that he had found funds for carrying on the war occasioned by the independence of America, without the imposition of new taxes; and that he had found means to establish, at the most difficult of all periods, that credit which his predecessors in office had not been able to preserve in time of peace.

He smiled when I told him, with exultation, of the ages, during which our system of liberty would last, nor had I any thing to answer, when he observed, that the judiciary branch of our constitution, in which we had happily improved upon our model, had already lost its character of inviolability. I will not take upon myself to appreciate the literary talents of Mr. Necker; they were great, no doubt, and he deserves credit with posterity, for having applied them on many occasions, with the full weight of his name and reputation, to the promotion of morality. But his style appears, at times, rather turgid than sublime; he thought more than he read, or had not adopted a good model of composition, as to language. It is a cumbrous robe of embroidery, with here and there a patch, which he wears upon all occasions, and sometimes even drags after him with pain. I can very well conceive what contradictory opinions may be entertained of Mr. Necker's merit as a statesman; but his merit in all the various relations of private life, was never yet contested. And when I consider him with attention, observed his demeanour and his

language, and reverted in my mind to the name he had established at a very early period of his career, I could not help applying to him the character given by Tacitus of the Emperor Galba, when he observes, that every one would have thought him worthy of the empire, had he never reigned. There must be something in the possession of power irresistibly captivating, notwithstanding the great, and, as one would suppose, painful responsibility, it is generally accompanied by. I question whether with all his philosophy, and all his contempt for the vain pomp and glory of the world, Mr. Necker could have resisted an invitation to return to Paris. I could perceive, that the look which he never failed to cast towards the door, when it opened, was the look of one who had been often disappointed. It reminded me of Sterne's captive, who casts a hopeless eye, shakes his head, and continues the work of affliction. In the course of conversation, I found that he had long lived in habits of intimacy with the celebrated Mr. Gibbon, whom he spoke of with great respect and affection, and described as fond of good-humoured irony in conversation; a trait of character, he thought, peculiar to the English, and as speaking French with the utmost purity, but with an accent which immediately betrayed him to be an Englishman.

You must remember Mademoiselle Curchaud, in Gibbon's Memoirs, and know that she afterwards became Madame Necker. She was the daughter of a clergyman, who had conferred on her a learned education, and gave lessons at Lausanne, at the time that Gibbon first resided there. Her union with Mr. Necker appears to have been the perfection of human happiness; they were, both of them, persons of great good sense, as well as of great acquirements; and while his attention was devoted to the public service, she not only did the honours of his house for them both, but took upon herself the department of their private affairs.

Like her parents, Madame de Stael has always been attached to literary pursuits, and to the company and conversation of men of letters. Her mind, however, had not been formed in the walks of private life, nor tried by adversity; and her wit and love of amusement have borne her away, as the horses of the sun did Phaeton.

It is singular, that the great good sense of her parents should have left them so desirous of a splendid match for their daughter, and that they should have annexed no other indispensable condition to the disposal of her hand in marriage, but nobility, and the profession of the Protestant religion; which Gibbon, from whom we learn the fact, calls a piece of religious obstinacy. They were also, it seems, desirous of placing their daughter in the higher ranks of society, but persons of their wisdom and virtue

ought to have foreseen, that her natural vivacity could but facilitate the effects of those bad examples they must have known she would be exposed to. Had her affections been consulted more than they probably were in so splendid a connexion, and had she remained in that station to which she was born, there were materials in her mind for the very perfection of domestic happiness. She has, indeed, blazed like a meteor, but if her good qualities had been called into action in another sphere, if her attentiveness to every obliging office, and her genuine benevolence of soul, aided by the means of an affluent fortune, and her incomparable temper, had preserved their proper influence in private life, she would have been as much beloved as she had been admired; and as much praised as she has been talked of. As the wife of an ambassador, Madame de Stael was received at court upon a footing which she could not have attained to from the claims of her family. She seems never, however, to have been a favourite there; and I can easily conceive that the Queen, who had received scarcely any education herself, must have been rather oppressed by such literary brilliancy in another. The society she lived in, too, were all of them, individually, considered as promoters of the revolution; they were really so, I believe, and she was delighted to glide gaily along the stream, and to contribute her utmost to the success of a cause which she supposed congenial to her principles. She has travelled a great deal, has lived at all times with great hospitality, and has been always ready to do a charitable or a generous and friendly action. She resides generally at her castle of Copet, and would willingly, I believe, diversify her life, with now and then a visit to the capital, but Buonaparte has continued, as Emperor, the restriction he had imposed upon her when first consul, of not approaching nearer than sixty miles to Paris.

At all events, and whatever the cause may have been, the fact is, that Madame de S. is in a state of continued exile from Paris, a circumstance which will, probably, be of no disservice to her with posterity, and which, when I reflect upon her indiscriminate hospitality, and upon that unbounded flow of conversation she delights in, may probably, I think, preserve her from being enveloped in some real or imaginary conspiracy against the government. Her penetrating mind and active curiosity, would very naturally have led to such a suspicion. I remember hearing Mr. Necker say, when some political mystery was discussed before him—if my daughter were in Paris now, we should know the truth of this in twelve hours.

The first time I saw this celebrated lady was in her castle of Copet, and when her mind was as yet strongly impressed with the loss of her father, of whom she never speaks but in terms of the

highest affection and veneration. She was surrounded, as usual, with a company of men, who hung upon all she said. By degrees, her natural cheerfulness prevailed, and, placing herself very much at her ease, with her feet resting upon an opposite chair, she ran on in a flow of lively conversation. She speaks, I think, even better than she writes, and is never at a loss for the happiest expressions, colouring every thing after a manner peculiar to herself, and deviating, at times, into anecdotes and descriptions, which might offend your chaster ears, on the other side of the Atlantic. Her person is of the middle size; her features are not all of them good, and her complexion is bad; but she has a certain roundness and amplitude of form, much admired and aspired to in this country, with a good-natured lively countenance, and very fine eyes. With many of the graces of her sex too, and with a natural desire for those triumphs, and that admiration they are entitled to, she rather unwisely goes over to the other sex on some occasions, if I may use the expression, in her conversation and manners; unwisely, I say, for it has added a sentiment of resentment to various other cases of umbrage in the minds of those whom she has left, whilst by those she now and then joins, she is considered as a deserter is in war by the party he takes refuge with.

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## LETTER XI.

ONE of the most agreeable excursions we have made, has been to the glaciers of Savoy, which Coxe and other travellers have rendered familiar to you by name, but which no description can convey an adequate idea of. I will simply give you an account of the impression they made upon us, but without entering into particulars which have been so frequently repeated. You must now open a map of Savoy, and observe the course of the Arve, which the road is governed by from Geneva to Chamouny. The towns mentioned by Coxe are such as he describes them. The country is wild and savage; little spots of good land appear well cultivated, in places that seem almost inaccessible; and what we should call, in America, the low grounds of the river, are, in general, an accumulation of very fine soil. But in some places a great deal of injury appears to have been occasioned by the ungovernable fury of the water, which now and then reassumes, like Providence, in a moment, what it had been ages in bestowing. If we may judge from appearances, the far greater part of this extensive valley of the Arve was formerly a chain of lakes, and one in particular is known to have been near Servoz. In

the centre of this lake, stood, on a craggy island, the castle of St. Michel, and a few miles below was the little town of St. Denys, not far, in all probability, from where the *pont des chevres* is placed on the map. Could an inhabitant of those days be called to life again, how great would be his astonishment, at the change which has taken place ! The poor dismantled remains of St. Michel are no longer on an island. The lake disappeared by the sudden failure of the mound which supported it, and the waters, in their retreat, swept away the town and all its inhabitants. It must have been a horrible catastrophe, and as unexpected as it was irresistible. For an hour or two from Servoz (for in this country they count by hours and not by miles,) the road has more the appearance of stairs, badly cut in the rock, than of a means of communication in carriages. Even the *char-à-banc*, of which I send you a drawing, is with difficulty dragged along. To the right is a steep, impending rock, to the left is a precipice, with the Arve bursting his way from one obstacle to another, at the bottom. The opposite side rises abruptly to a very great height, and almost perpendicularly ; and yet, not far from the summit, I observed a man mowing. The spot which was to reward his industry, seemed less than a quarter of an acre. It lay, like an island, amid a waste of barren rocks, and was so steep, that had he lost his foot-hold, he must have fallen into a chasm of at least 2000 feet.

At a very small distance from the part of the road where we saw the man mowing, as it were, in the air, the singular appearance of which will never be effaced from my imagination, we entered the valley of Chamouny, a valley so often described, that I can conceive your being better acquainted with it, than with the Calf-pasture, or the Shenandoe. The Arve runs along the middle, and on either side, the banks, which rise by a very rapid slope, are diversified by various sorts of produce, till they become too steep, or too barren, to be cultivated. Houses and villages are thickly scattered, and every thing bespeaks plenty and good husbandry, while the glaciers, which, like enormous icicles, are protruded down the sides of the mountains they belong to, create a contrast with the beauties of vegetation, which exceeds all I ever beheld, in novelty and in magnificence.

Hitherto, the inhabitants of Savoy, though frequently in possession of a fertile soil, had appeared a poor, dispirited, and miserable race ; and the shepherdesses of the Alps had looked more like gipsies, than those elegant rural forms which the genius of painting has bestowed upon them. But in the valley of Chamouny the race of the inhabitants seemed improved ; the men are well looking and well-behaved, and the women are a

great proportion of them pretty; all seemed industrious, and their children were well clothed.

The moonlight view from Chamouny is extremely sublime. At a small distance appears Mont Blanc, at the perpendicular height, above the valley, of upwards of 12,000 feet, and to the left is a range of lofty eminences, the lowest of which would, in any other situation, command the admiration of travellers.

The next morning, at an early hour, we proceeded to ascend a mountain, which is on the opposite side of the valley to the Montanvert, each of us mounted on a mule, and each accompanied by a guide on foot. These guides are a race of active, intelligent, good-humoured people, who live by attending strangers on such occasions, and know the value of a good character. The ascent was every where rapid, and the road, in some places, was but a narrow shelf, hanging suspended over a frightful declivity; so perfectly sure-footed, however, are the mules, and so entirely do they assume the management upon these occasions, that no one seems afraid. After a long ascent, we found ourselves on an eminence, which the calculations of geometers have fixed at 3000 feet above the Priory; and here, upon turning round, we beheld Mont Blanc, in all its sublimity of height and of eternal snow. The other mountains and needles of granite, were like enormous giants upon guard around its base. It seemed as if the curtain of creation had been raised, as if we were arrived at some other world. It is hence that the efforts of those who have attained to the top of Mont Blanc may be conceived, and that the various glaciers may be traced from their origin, in the mountains, to the valley below. We remained here about half an hour, and then descended a little lower, to a spring, where, as Mr. Coxe expresses himself, we refreshed ourselves with some cold victuals we had brought with us. Plain truth needs, indeed, no flowers of speech, but such a dinner, in such a place, is deserving of a few words more. A rock, from which the water sprung, served us as a table, and towards the end of our dinner, we were joined by two young women of Chamouny, with baskets of berries, which they had collected from the rocks above us. They were attended by a gothard, who, with a hunting horn slung from his neck, and with a wild yet good-natured countenance, was the very emblem of rural simplicity. Neither he nor the young women would eat meat, as it was on a Friday, but the guides, who are the fine gentlemen of the valley, and have the advantages of travelling, without going from home, were burthened with no such scruples.

The comfortable accommodation of a good inn, enabled us to undertake the ascent of the Montanvert the next day; but the mules which we set out upon could only carry us half-way up,



and it was necessary to perform the rest of the expedition on foot. . This our ladies prepared themselves for with courage, and each placing herself between two guides, who walked one before and the other behind her, and resting with either hand upon two poles, the extremities of which were held horizontally by the guides, moved slowly forwards, while the others of us walked singly. We ascended in this manner about three miles, from where the mules were left, stopping frequently to take breath, and admiring, at every pause, the beauty of the valley below us, in which the narrow fields of grain, of clover, and of potatoes, seemed spread along like ribbons. I took occasion to inform the guides that they were obliged to the country I and my fellow-travellers came from, for the introduction of potatoes, which has enabled them to economise their wheat, so as to export a certain quantity every year, instead of importing, as they used to do, an annual supply from Lombardy; and we excited their admiration by other particulars of the country we came from, by making them comprehend the extent of the ocean we had passed over on our way from Europe. We passed below many fragments of rock, which seemed to have been accidentally impeded on their descent towards the foot of the mountain, and over some steep gullies, where a person committing himself to his own weight, would have descended with frightful velocity. We approached, at length, to an open space: it was a small pasturage, and there was a hut and another small building of apparently elegant construction, which seemed ready for our reception; but the sensation of fatigue gave way to that of admiration or surprise, when, on moving across the narrow space which terminated the ascent, we found ourselves on the brink of another valley, broader than that of Chamouny, and filled up to within a few hundred feet with ice, which rose into a variety of forms and inequalities—this is the place described by travellers as the sea of ice, and which, extending for several miles, and bordering by high, inaccessible, and naked rocks of granite, and opening from place to place into frightful chasms, seems the seat of eternal winter.

If you can suppose, for a moment, the valley which leads through the S. W. mountains from immediately behind the house at Belvoir, filled up with snow blown from the neighbouring heights, and that snow compressed by its own weight, and connected into one mass by the water, which, trickling through from the surface, becomes frozen as it descends, and the extremity of this mighty mass protruded into the old fields, and ending abruptly, and a rapid stream issuing from below it, you may form some idea of what a glacier is. Mr. Coxe gives a very good description of the scene which was now before us, availing

himself of those who have gone before him, and particularly of M. de Saussure—so entirely, indeed, does he confine his narration to what was already written, that had he not told us that he put cramp-irons to his shoes, and that he afterwards refreshed himself with cold victuals, his description might have been supposed the production of some laborious compiler in a garret. We left some of our company at the top of the mountain, and descending with the others to the surface of the sea of ice, advanced upon it with great caution, as you may imagine, for about 150 yards. On all sides there was to be heard a rush of waters; and there were crevices, the very idea of approaching which was painful, and inequalities like the waves of a high sea.

After surveying the scene about us for some time, and hearing the effects of the large fragments of rock, which our guides rolled into the crevices, we ascended again, and having registered our names in a sort of temple of fame, which the edifice generously erected by a Monsieur Desportes, for the protection of travellers, has been converted into, and on the same pannel with those of Mr. and Mrs. Derby whom you must remember at K——, we commenced our return towards the valley, taking another road for that purpose, and descending towards the source of the Arveiron, which is at the lower extremity of the sea of ice, and 2782, perpendicular feet below the edifice on Montanvert. We were too late in the year to enjoy the sublime beauties of this view, as they are described by travellers. The immense arch of ice of 100 feet in height, and broad in proportion, had lately fallen in; but various tints of colour, from a pale white to a deep green, diversified the surface, which rose abruptly, and ended in pyramidical forms; while the Aiguille de Dru, one of the naked rocks of granite, which I mentioned as appearing to bound the valley of ice, was visible above all, rising like an immense obelisk to the stupendous height of upwards of 9000 feet from the spot we stood on. What added to the singularity of the scene before us, were the forest trees which cover the sides of the Montanvert, and of the opposite mountains, from the bosom of which the glacier descends. It was now late in the day, and we returned to our inn along the meadows and well cultivated fields of the valley.

The whole of this country has undergone very great alterations, and by very violent means. The glaciers were evidently 1500 feet more elevated, at some distant period, than they are now; and the strata of several of the mountains we had passed on the road to Chamouny are not only vertical, but what is still more difficult to be accounted for, they may be almost said to form segments of circles. Perhaps upon the sudden withdrawing of the great mass of waters, in the depths of which these mountains were

formed, by successive accumulations of some soft material, their foundations gave way as the earth became dry, and they thus assumed, by the extension of some parts, and the contraction of others, those singular appearances which we now behold. I have already mentioned the evident marks to be met with, of the sea having covered the tops of very lofty mountains, and it is certain that the extremity of the eminence immediately behind the little village of St. Martin, near Salenche, which rises to the height of upwards of 6000 feet, is entirely composed of marine fossils. As to the former altitude of the glaciers, it is inferred by the immense detached rocks remaining in different places, where no other power we know of but that of the glaciers can have conveyed them, and where they have been left on the slope of the valley, as the ebb tide leaves pebbles on the beach of the ocean.

Our third and last day in this happy valley was chiefly employed in visiting the Glacier de Buisson, which is of very easy access. The road lay for a little way along the river side, amid small clusters of houses, each of which was generally provided with an oratory, in which the figure of the Virgin, with the holy infant in her arms, appears in a recess, behind a grating of wire, and at the top is a sacred promise made by the Bishop, that so many prayers said in that spot, will operate as a mitigation of so many days in Purgatory. We Protestants, it is true, are no more to be persuaded of the good Bishop's knowledge, or power upon the occasion, than we are of Dulcinea's disenchantment in virtue of Sancho's scourging himself; but to the sincere Catholic it is a very different affair, and though no one, not even a bishop perhaps, notwithstanding what the Catholics believe, can tell how far the promise may hold good with respect to purgatory, we may any of us venture to assert, that a person who would devoutly pour out his soul in prayer, before an object connected in his mind with the idea of the Supreme Being, would be less likely than another to incur punishment hereafter. I have often lamented, that the improvement of the human mind could not have gone on, and left the ancient system of religion undisturbed. But to return to the glacier, we approached by a gentle slope, and halted for a moment in a wood to admire the striking and beautiful contrast which is created by the cones of ice as they rise up at a distance like the minarets of a Moorish town, and glitter through the trees. The ascent became afterwards more rapid, and the cones appeared in all their singular magnificence of height and structure. There seemed to be many of them higher than the tallest trees, while the base of the solid ice they rested upon must be some hundred feet in thickness. As this part of the glacier is uninterruptedly connected with a great mass of ice and snow stretching

towards the upper region of Mont Blanc, for an extent of perhaps seven or eight miles, and as the valley it rests upon is, in this place, extremely rapid, the probability is, that immense fragments moving down confusedly together, have been brought to assume their present appearance, by the joint operation of the rain and of the sun. A little higher up, and where the ascent is for a short space much less steep, the glacier may be crossed with safety ; and we walked deliberately along, under the direction of our guides, upon the bed of ice. It was a warm day in August, and that circumstance added not a little to the novelty of every thing about us.

We undertook no distant excursion either here or upon the sea of ice, or on Mont Blanc ; but you may form a very good idea of the accidents to which persons who make these perilous attempts are exposed, by reading M. de Saussure, or Mr. Coxe, who has followed him very exactly. That a hunter who had been from his infancy accustomed to the sight of precipices, should be instigated by the desire of providing for his family, by the love of a sort of glory, and by the animation of pursuit, to risk his life amid the frightful wilds "of covered pits unfathomably deep," does not surprise me ; but I am, I confess, astonished that the desire of novelty, and that the objects even of Monsieur de Saussure's curiosity, should lead any one to incur the danger of putting an end to his existence in this wilderness ; the danger arises very much from what Thomson, who seems to have been inspired, calls "Those precipices huge, smoothed o'er with snow." It is not long since a person walking upon the surface of a neighbouring mountain, and on a part always covered with snow, suddenly disappeared, to the great horror of his companions. In as short a time as possible ropes were procured, and a resolute mountaineer was let down through the same orifice ; at the depth of between two and three hundred feet were found the remains of the unhappy traveller ; he had been precipitated between two walls of ice which approached as they descended, and had been compressed to death by the shock ; still, however, the ice immediately before his mouth had the appearance of having been slightly thawed, so that he must have survived his fall for at least three or four minutes.

A monument by the road side on the way to Chamouny records his name and his misfortune, and gives a wholesome caution to travellers. On our way back to Chamouny, I observed several of the inhabitants gathering elm leaves, which were to be put up and used as fodder during the winter, the length of which induces them to neglect no means of providing for their cattle. It frequently happens, that the snow remains to the thickness of a foot in the month of April, but those who are desirous of sowing their

grain as soon as possible, are careful to accelerate the thaw by scattering handfuls of dark earth over the surface of the snow. The custom of the valley is to make an equal division of their field between grass, grain, and vegetables of various kinds, and transfer the different sorts of labour and culture every six years. Their cows form the principal article of their wealth, for cheese, in addition to a little wheat, is the only thing they make for sale. In addition to what they possess in the valley, many individuals have little tracts of pasturage at a distance, and all have a common right to that of the mountain, where they send their cows under the care of a herdsman, and a maker of cheese, who is called the fruitier. And in order that a fair division of the produce may be made, the owners of the cows attend in person, eight days after the pasturage is open, and again on the 15th or 16th of August; the cows are milked, and the milk is weighed in their presence, and according to the produce of those two days, is their proportion of butter and cheese regulated. The people of the valley are universally civil to strangers: they are intelligent also and conversable; like those of their class in every part of Europe, they are superstitious, and the more so, perhaps, as sailors are, from the dangers to which they are frequently exposed. No voyage at sea can indeed exceed in danger or fatigue the excursions of a hunter; and the idea is, that when a man loses his life amid the chasms of the ice, or the precipices of the mountain, his ghost is sure to appear at night to the person whom he loved best. They are attached to the observance of their religion, but appear to regret their former Seigneurs, the Benedictines, less than I expected. There is something generally odious, I presume, in Feudal tenures, and men are too apt to forget that these form frequently the only price given by their ancestors, for the land which they inhabit; some of these tenures were rather ludicrous than oppressive; the representative of the Seignior had a right, for instance, to place his leg, with a boot on, in the bed of a new married lady, and to keep it there a certain time, but the exercise of the right was always bought of by a haunch of chamois, or a saddle of mutton.

Monsieur de Saussure, whose name I have so often mentioned to you, thought very advantageously of the people of this valley, and has related several characteristic traits of their manners and conversation. "I went once, says he, as I descended weary from the mountains, into a lonely hut, and asked for a bowl of milk, which was immediately and cheerfully handed me by the owner of it, a woman of good appearance, who having lost her husband and her brothers by an epidemical disorder, was left with two young children and an infant in the cradle. After hearing

that I was a Genevois, and consequently a Protestant, she could not, she said, bring herself to believe, that all of my persuasion were to be consigned to eternal punishment in another world; that many Protestants were good people, and God was too just not to make a distinction between the good and bad of all sects. But we know nothing of these things after all, however, continued she, for of the numbers who have departed, not one to my knowledge, at least, has ever returned! for my part, how have I not lamented my husband and my brothers? how have I not conjured them to impart to me where they are removed to, and what is their present situation? Ah, surely if they existed at all, they would not leave me in this state of wretched uncertainty; but perhaps I am not worthy of such a favour, perhaps the pure untainted souls of those children enjoy the comfort of their presence, and a happiness which I must not aspire to."

Every one who visits the valley of Chamouny will be made sensible of the greatest obligations to M. de Saussure, if he takes the trouble of looking into the works of that distinguished traveller. He was the third individual who was able to surmount the difficulties and dangers, which attend the ascent of Mont Blanc, and very skilfully availed himself of the few hours which he passed there. Seated upon this noble observatory, and provided with every necessary instrument, he proceeded without a moment's loss of time to accomplish the objects of so perilous an undertaking. The Barometer gave him, according to the improved process of M. de Luc, within a few feet of the same height which had been attributed to the mountain by the usual mode of trigonometrical measurement. The Hygrometer showed the air to contain six times less humidity than the atmosphere of Geneva, which no doubt contributed, with other causes, to that continued thirst the guides and himself laboured under; and the temperature at which water boiled was found to contain scarcely a twelfth of the heat necessary to create ebullition in the regions below. This last experiment had been suggested by M. de Luc, and is very ingeniously and accurately applied to measurement of height, as I will explain to you hereafter. We may easily suppose, that no one would be tempted to remain long in these regions of eternal winter, even had not nature made it impossible to do so. The extreme rarity of the atmosphere renders an increased operation of the lungs necessary to respiration, this of course affects the circulation; a fever is brought on, and there succeeds a dislike to every sort of sustenance but water, which can only be procured by melting snow. Nothing, in short, but the most ardent curiosity, founded on a knowledge of all the various branches of natural history, could have enabled M. de Saussure

to remain four and a half hours on the summit of Mont Blanc. His constitution, which was naturally robust, was thought to have suffered extremely by these annual excursions, and it was his misfortune to outlive for some time the faculties of his mind.

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## LETTER XII.

I AVAILED myself to the utmost of the little time my brother staid with me. I carried him to the different places of the environs, whence he could form the best idea of this beautiful country ; to Ferney, where the shade of Voltaire seems still to hover, to the neighbouring mountain of Saleve, and afterwards Meillerai ; and when the rain would not permit us to go out, we had old times to talk over, and new books to look into ; and we had the inexhaustible subjects of winter grass, English and Latin Prosody, the properties of the lever, and the law of nations.

Of those branches of the Alps which shut in Geneva to the eastward, the most conspicuous is Saleve, which, though at the distance of nearly five miles, appears to one who enters the opposite side of the city to be hanging over it. Its height is upwards of 3000 feet, and its original length must have amounted to five or six miles. I say original, for some powerful cause, acting in very remote times, has divided into two mountains what must have been, apparently, one. The general opinion is, that the instrument upon this occasion was the water of that great ocean, which once covered the face of this country, and which suddenly, and with irresistible violence, was made to change its level. The confused accumulation of rocks at the foot of the hollow that separates the two mountains, renders the agency of water probable, and the marine shells which are found by myriads, either in beds or separately, in various parts of both, and the sand now covered by a thin layer of vegetable soil on the top of the higher Saleve, show that water to have been salt. The interval between the two mountains is a fertile valley ; it looks like the bed of some river, which had been lately turned aside, and the appearance is the more singular, from the long ascent which leads to it by the only road that is practicable on horseback.

About midway in the valley is the little Savoyard village of Moneti, and this is succeeded by well cultivated fields, that end abruptly by a precipice, on the very edge of which stand the ruins of the *Chateau de l'Hermitage*. This castle must have been erected in very distant times, long before the use of artillery was known, and when the protection of a family from outrage, and security for the spoils of war, were the objects principally attended to in choosing a situation.

There cannot be a more beautiful and variegated view than is commanded from this spot, which, though in a deep valley, as to the mountains on each side of it, is yet elevated to the height of several hundred feet above the plain below. The lake, the city of Geneva, the towns, villages, and cultivated hill sides, and the great basin, which for a while held in the diminished waters of the ocean, are spread out in all their magnificence of extent. It is probable that the vent of this inland sea, confined by Jura on the one side and Saleve on the other, was over the Sion mountain, till the burst took place at l'Ecluse, and to judge by the deep and horizontal though somewhat inclining traces left on the face of the rock, the current of this Bosphorous of ancient days must have been very rapid, as rapid perhaps as the stream of Niagara, immediately above the rock over which the water now so tremendously descends; and which yielding in the lapse of ages to the slow but regular diminution of its mass, will one time or other probably let loose the waters of Ontario, and give to agriculture those thousands of acres which now lie buried in the abyss, as the Pays de Vaud once did. The citizen of Geneva, says Monsieur de Saussure, must above all men enjoy this view; he beholds his native city, he follows with his eyes the fortifications, the harbour, and the public walks, and he traces the portions of subject territory which lie embosomed within the neighbouring States. He thanks heaven, which placed the seat of all his heart holds dear in a land of freedom, and admires with gratitude those coinciding causes, and that reunion of circumstances, which must for ever secure the independence of Geneva. What the feelings of a Genevan are, who now looks down upon his native city from the Chateau de l'Hermitage, may be conceived without any great effort of the imagination.

The ride to Ferney occupied a morning very agreeably. You will see in the descriptions of various travellers a good account of the house and of the neighbouring town, which does infinite honour to the sagacity, to the taste, and to the humanity of Voltaire. The bed in which he lay, and the furniture of his chamber, remain as he left them, and there are several valuable pictures of distinguished persons hanging up in the room.

My next excursion with my brother was to Meillerai, along the Savoy side of the lake. The country is by no means as well inhabited or as well cultivated as the Pays de Vaud; the soil indeed is not in general as good, nor the exposure as favourable for the cultivation of the vine; and the government of the King of Sardinia, though not oppressive, was not such as gave encouragement to industry and to the arts.

In about an hour from Evian we reached the commencement of the new road, which is at first a stately causeway, and then a ter-



race cut in the rock, where it descends almost in a precipice to the side of the water. This, when finished, will be the common passage into Italy, and will no doubt be travelled by many a young man, who, with the whole scenery of the *Nouvelle Heloise* before his eyes, will conceit that he is passing under the very rock that St. Prieux wrote from. Meillerai is a miserable village of fishermen and raisers of stone, who cannot be made to understand the advantage they are to derive from a road being carried through their country; in a few years they will know better, and will think no longer of a little piece of garden ground, or of a favourite walnut-tree, which may have been sacrificed upon the occasion. We took a boat and rowed out upon the lake, and the little narrow street of wretched houses we had just left, seemed now, as they presented themselves in a bay upon the margin of a smooth lake, and beneath impending woods, to be the very seat of blissful retirement. The part we now floated on is known by actual sounding to be upwards of 1000 feet in depth, so that the mountain behind the house at Belvoir would form a little island of a few acres, which is all that the lake requires to complete the beauty of its scenery.

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### LETTER XIII.

WE are now at Secheron, where we have a very good house on the borders of the lake; and the pleasure of going upon the water of a fine afternoon is thus added to the many other enjoyments of this fine country. Our great and principal object of education for a part of the family, is promoted by our stay; your new sister will be better able to bear the fatigue of travelling, and your brother will enjoy the advantage of a paternal home a little longer. He will follow us in less than two years, and finish his education in his own country. The persons who direct our seminaries or universities in America are, I presume, upon a footing with the teachers and heads of houses of other countries; but their plan of instruction commences so soon, and goes on so rapidly, that a young man is often left unemployed at a very awkward moment of his life. I was once in hopes that we should have had a great national school and university in a central part of the United States, where young men from different parts of the Union might have become acquainted in early life, and have been in some degree united ever after.

I will now give you some account of an excursion my brother and I had made into the Pays de Vaud. Immediately behind Granson, which you will find on any map of Switzerland, is situated the little village of Giez, where our kinsman, Sir James K—

passed a retired and blameless life of many years. He was heir at law to a good estate in Scotland, but was driven by circumstances, which there was no controuling it seems, to give up all such prospects, and to remain satisfied with a moderate allowance made him by his younger brother. I passed some time with him, when I was formerly in Switzerland, and well remember how much I had occasion to admire the cheerfulness with which he bore his misfortunes. He had then so nearly forgotten his native language as to prefer expressing himself in French, even to me, and had yet retained so much of the Scotch accent, that it was sometimes difficult for his children to comprehend him.

There was something in the circumstance of us, Americans, passing a day with a number of relations at the foot of Mount Jura, that was singular and almost romantic. They received and treated us with the greatest kindness and hospitality, in a house which bespoke a decent plenty, which is better than opulence; they talked over, but without bitterness, the injustice which the family had suffered in Scotland; they showed us the good old gentleman's picture, done in his better days, with the family arms in one corner of it; and pointed out the oak tree, under the shade of which it had been his desire to be buried. Between the village and the lake is the field where the Duke of Burgundy held his head quarters, and the stone is still distinguished, on which, tradition says, he was seated, when he treacherously gave orders for the execution of the garrison of Granson. It is called to this day the stone of evil council, and has remained a memorial of the Duke's wickedness and folly, for upwards of three hundred years. It was on this stone he was seated too, it is said, when, hearing of the approach of the Swiss, he most unwisely ordered his forces to advance and meet them, quitting then the open space near the lake, where his cavalry and artillery might have acted with efficacy against an enemy who had neither, and giving them the advantage of a field of battle best suited to their mode of warfare, and their means of defence.

Ancient as well as modern history renders the whole of this country interesting. Yverdon and Orbe, every town, and almost every village we passed through, are known to have been Roman stations, and the road we travelled on was the same which was used in the time of the Cæsars. Some of these towns carry their pretensions to antiquity very far back indeed; and were of the twelve, it is said, which the Helvetians were desirous of destroying, when they were about to change, as they supposed, the rigours of their climate, for the fertile fields, the vineyards, and the milder air of the south of France.

The lake of Yverdon appears to have been of much greater extent in former times; and the town, which is known to have

been on a narrow peninsula, now owns a valuable tract of the low grounds between its walls and the margin of the water. A traveller who had leisure, and sufficient knowledge, to select the proper objects of curiosity, might pass some months in this country with very great satisfaction; he might trace, in many instances, the operations of nature in the marks of those great convulsions which have deformed the surface of our globe, and in that secret growth and gradual transformation, which takes place in the course of revolving centuries; he would be pleased too with the manners of the people, which have been less affected than one would suppose possible, by the bitterness of civil war, and retain a great deal of their former simplicity.

In some parts of Switzerland, from local causes, or accidental circumstances, the inhabitants remained Catholics; but in the Pays de Vaud, where the fertility of the soil had promoted that intercourse with the world, in the exchange of articles of mutual use, which is generally accompanied by improvement in the arts and sciences, the general tendency was in favour of Protestantism. There were some exceptions, however, and there are two or three little villages which have remained attached to the old religion. What is still more singular, there is one where the inhabitants, being equally divided, could come to no decision. They wisely resolved, however, not to quarrel about it, and have now continued for two centuries and upwards in the same place of worship.

Having parted with my brother at Giez, I returned to Geneva by the way of Vinciy, but stopped for an hour at Allamans, which you will find on the map to the north of Rolle. Upon a gentle eminence, overlooking a little village, is an old family house; there is a spacious garden annexed to it, with a stream of water running through, and an ancient wood and natural terrace of nearly a mile, with a river at the foot of it, which is seen to enter the lake; on the other side of the lake, the view, after reposing for a moment on the slope of the vineyard near Thonon, loses itself in the Alps. Such is Allamans, and if to the circumstances I have mentioned you add, that it is in the midst of a high, healthy, and well cultivated country, you will think it singular that the proprietor of such a place, who is also a man of very large fortune, should prefer passing his summer in Geneva. But the revolution in the Pays de Vaud, which destroyed the remains of the feudal system, has produced a bitterness of animosity between the former seigneurs and their vassals, which must render the residence of a castle unpleasant.

Vinciy is the seat of a gentleman who married a grand-daughter of Sir James, and I felt myself here, as well as at Giez, in the house of a relation. It is in the finest part of La Côte, and situated in a manner to remind me very much of Belvoir. The

mountain behind the house rises to about the same height, and they look down upon the lake, as you do on the tops of pine trees ; but after a space for a terrace before the door, and the garden ground, with a small portion of the mountain which furnishes firewood, the whole, as far as the eye can reach, and down to the lake, is in a state of the highest cultivation, and principally in vineyards. Mr. de Vincy, who served many years in Corsica, knew Napoleon, and used to lend him books, as to a promising young man ; that is, he used to permit him to come and read them at his quarters.

The result of a family council was, that we should cross the Alps and go by Turin as far as Milan. Your brother was delighted at the prospect of seeing another nation, of hearing another language, of pursuing the road of Hannibal, and of breathing the air of Italy, which had produced so many great men ; and I was to attend him as the Sybil does Æneas, in order to explain some things, and to give him a distinct idea of others, which he will better comprehend hereafter. The little village of St. Julien put me in mind of the sisters of St. Claire, who experienced a hospitable and affectionate reception there, when they were compelled to quit their convent in Geneva ; and our first halt was at Frangy, which you will easily find, if you can prevail on yourself to spread a map of Savoy upon the table.

The inn was a castle in former day, and it still, even in its present degraded situation, retains somewhat of a castle-like appearance. I remembered stopping at the same house about seven and twenty years ago, with two English gentlemen, one of whom is distinguished by Dr. Moore in this tour by the letter H, which was the initial letter of his name ; he was then, when we dined together at Frangy, a sprightly, good-humoured, handsome young man, of large fortune, and still greater expectations : unfortunately for himself and for mankind, to whom he would have proved an ornament, he was desirous of distinction, but totally mistook the proper road which led to it ; he lost his money at cards, although he hated gaming ; and drank to excess without any passion for liquor. He so managed, in short, that his fortune and his constitution expired together, at the early age of five or six and twenty.

“ 'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.”

The little town of Frangy lies at the bottom of a circle of hills, surrounding it like a funnel ; these slopes have long been distinguished for the wine they produce, and which Rousseau says, contributed, as much as the arguments of the curate, to make him abandon the Protestant faith. The whole surface of the

country resembles that of the ocean in a storm of an immense scale : we found ourselves at one moment upwards of a thousand feet above the level of the lake of Geneva, and then the moment after nearly two hundred feet below it. We stopt at Rumilly for the night, after ascertaining the spot, as we entered the town over a bridge, where two young people, travelling in a chaise, were some years ago exposed to a frightful fall. The postillion perceiving that the impulse of the carriage would prevent his turning in time to reach the bridge, had left them to their fate on the brink of a precipice of upwards of sixty feet, down which they were precipitated, so as to fall on the edge of the river ; the horses were killed, and the chaise crushed, but it had fallen on the top where there was an imperial filled with clothes, the shock had been by that means diminished, and the young people escaped unhurt.

As we arrived early in the evening, we had time to walk about the town, and found a guide for that purpose in a well-looking woman, who had formerly, she told us, been a nun, and who carried us to the ruins of her convent ; the church had been converted into a store-house, and a detachment of gendarmerie was in possession of what remained of the cells ; this was a sight which our guide had not been yet rendered callous to, and I observed a sort of satisfaction in her eyes, when she told us of a fatal accident which had happened to one of the principal purchasers of the convent. She had known more sorrow during six years in the world she told me, than during fourteen in her former recluse life.

In continuing our route towards Aix, we were soon, as you will perceive by the map, between two small lakes, that of Bourget, which we now and then got a glimpse of, and that of Annecy, at a greater distance on our left. There is something extremely picturesque in the appearance of a lake surrounded by lofty mountains, that of Annecy in particular, the borders of which, though rising abruptly, are in the highest state of cultivation, and have excited the admiration of all travellers. That of Bourget extended most probably, in former times, as far as Chambéry ; it is now about nine miles long, but forms a source of variety and amusement to the valetudinarians, who take the water of Aix. We arrived at this little watering place before the service of the church had commenced ; it was Sunday, and we were diverted at the arts of a religious mountebank. He was selling crosses of pewter, which had been blessed by the Pope, and finding the crowd of peasants rather slow in purchasing, although he spoke with wonderful volubility, he took out a fiddle from under his cloak, and proposed to the assembly, that they should join him in a hymn. Orpheus himself could hardly have been more powerful ; they now began

to buy after the first two or three stanzas, and the whole stock of crosses was disposed of at the rate of six sous a piece, before the hymn was finished.

Aix seems to have been a place of favourite residence in the time of the Roman empire, and to have been inhabited by opulent people. There are several remains of antiquity, and a set of vapour baths which might be restored to use at no great expense. Many of the vats into which the water was received, and which were cased with marble, are still entire, as well as the tubes which conveyed the vapour; nothing struck me more than the size of the bricks made use of in this subterraneous edifice; they were in general of the dimensions of six by twelve inches, and seemed to have been materials worthy of those who built for posterity. Chambéri, so long the capital of Savoy, is a town of about ten thousand inhabitants, situated in a pleasant valley of well cultivated fields, without any great marks of opulence either within or around it. Rousseau has given a very interesting picture of the inhabitants in his time, and one naturally looks out for the Charmettes in descending by a noble road, from the upper part of which there is a prospect of the whole country. You know the life he led there with Madame de Warrens, for whom I cannot feel as Arthur Young did. Her good nature was folly itself, and the most sacred of all names seems to have been applied in a very unworthy manner,

From Chambéri, where we remained but an hour or two, we passed on to Montmelian, and thence to Aiguebelle, where we stopped for the night. Not far from this little town is the mountain of St. George, which abounds with copper ore, and where the possibility of getting rich in a short time entices a great many of the neighbouring peasantry to quit the far more certain pursuits of agriculture. It is a sort of lottery, which they cannot resist the fascination of. The dealers in copper ore, who attend, are always ready to purchase, at a low price indeed, but for ready money, whatever the labourers are so fortunate as to find, or to advance them small sums; and these poor people, who are miserably clothed and fed, after many years of a most laborious occupation, are generally seen to die in extreme want. We went down into the smelting room, says the author which I have before me, and found one of the artificers preparing his dinner. He was a man advanced in years, whose grey hairs and venerable beard assumed somewhat of a paler hue from the dim light of the burning dross of the furnace; over these he had placed a small iron pot, in which he was dipping from time to time the bird that he meant to make a meal of, as soon as he could get the feathers off; it was a crow, and such wretched fare seemed but too well suited to

the squalidness of his appearance; we pitied him for both.\* There have been several fatal instances in this country of parts of mountains which have suddenly given way and overwhelmed a portion of the plain. A league of country, at a little distance from Chamberi, still exhibits the effects of such a catastrophe, though it took place in the thirteenth century. Several villages were destroyed, and more would have shared their fate, had it not been for the interposition of our Lady of Mians, whose miraculous image may be still seen at a neighbouring church.

The Castle of Montmelian exhibits a poor appearance of ruined works and dismantled towers, and as the road winds up the hill on the opposite side of the river, it is very easy to understand the grounds of Sully's confidence as to the facility of taking it. We thought of Sully again at Aiguebelle, but there are no traces upon the neighbouring mountain of the fort which he so gallantly made himself master of.

We now entered the narrow valleys of the Alps, the sides of which were cultivated, and chiefly in vines, wherever a little interval of soil amid barren rocks would admit of it, while the river Arck rolled along at the bottom, bidding defiance to every species of navigation, and frequently rising from its natural limits to lay waste the narrow strip of low grounds which sometimes borders it. The great road which the French government has carried on for the passage of the Alps begins hereabouts, and follows the course of the river. It affords a safe and easy conveyance for troops and artillery, and the traveller in future times will hardly believe the accounts of those who have preceded him.

We now ascended almost continually through a savage country, fit only for wolves and bears to roam at large in, and overgrown with mountain pine; the appearance of scattered cultivation had ceased, and the rushing of torrents precipitating themselves from rock to rock, was heard on all sides. Lanslebourg is a large village, altogether inhabited by muleteers and chairmen, who are at the service of those who wish to cross the mountain, and the traveller is saved both from their importunity and their

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\* Mr. Mawe in his account of Brazils, observes "that a passion for mining is generally fatal to the lower orders of the people wherever it prevails; it deludes them with a prospect of becoming suddenly rich, and creating a disgust for labour, entails want and wretchedness upon them. I observed even in this district, says he, that those who devoted themselves wholly to mining are in general badly clothed, and worse fed, whilst those who attended to agriculture alone, were well provided with every necessary of life." All these advantages, speaking of one of the finest parts of the Brazils, are lost to the present occupiers, who consider them too cheap to be valuable, and are always hankering after the precious minerals, and seem to think, that the only standard for estimating the works of nature is the difficulty of acquiring them.

imposition, by a system of police, which is strictly carried into execution.

We could not bear that there should be but a few miles between us and a prospect of Italy, and determined to ascend the mountain on the evening of our arrival at Lanslebourg. We had figured to ourselves some projecting rock from which Hannibal might be supposed to have pointed out the fertile plains below to the impatient curiosity of his soldiers; but no such rock appeared; we found ourselves on a plain when we ascended, and this terminated by a gentle slope in a very pretty lake of between three and four miles in circuit. There was still some snow on the plain, but in small masses, and there was the commencement of a most luxuriant vegetation.

I have mentioned to you before, that the lake of Geneva is twelve hundred and forty feet above the sea. Lanslebourg is three thousand three hundred and eighty-two feet above the lake of Geneva, and the plain of Mount Cenis is about two thousand two hundred feet above Lanslebourg, so that the little inn where your brother and I found a bed for the night, is nearly seven thousand feet higher than the level of the sea.

We began to descend at a very early hour the next day, and found time to admire the great efforts which the labourers upon the new road were making under the direction of a skilful engineer. Our guide pointed out to us, also, a sharp rock of prodigious height, far upon our left, on the pinnacle of which is a chapel dedicated to Notre dame de la Neige, whose image has been long renowned for many miraculous cures; this holy image is still visited and adored by great numbers, in the month of August particularly, notwithstanding the fatal accidents which so dangerous a pilgrimage has given rise to; two thousand persons have been seen there at a time, and as there is only room on the point of the rock for the chapel, and within the chapel for the priest who officiates, the congregation is in clusters, as they can best place themselves, like pigeons on a house-top. The priest, whose mode of life may be supposed to have rendered him less expert in climbing, is generally assisted in the ascent and descent by a rope about his body; but it frequently happens, that some one, whom devotion has ceased to inspire, either falls asleep during the service, or makes a false step, or remains too late to find the way home, and is precipitated into the abyss. With a view of saving these pious people from danger, the government had the holy image removed to Sura, a few years before the revolution, but it was missing the next morning from the sanctuary, where it had been deposited with all due reverence, and was found precisely in the niche it had formerly occupied. So at least are all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood persuaded, nor can



they, of course, have the smallest doubt of the divine interposition on the occasion. I saw another chapel similarly situated on the Savoy side of the Alps, to which it was customary, I was informed, to convey such infants as die without baptism, and whom the tenderness of their parents very naturally endeavoured to rescue from the penalties which the Roman church denounces in such cases. The child, after some time passed in prayer by the attendants, and after the proper gifts have been placed on the altar, is always seen to give some sign of life, and this, however small, is always such as justifies the administration of baptism.

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#### LETTER XIV.

WE are now in Italy; to the bleak rocks, and snowy extremities, which surrounded the plain of mount Cenis, succeeded the verdant fields and vineyards of the neighbourhood of La Novaleze, and a softness and sweetness in the air not unlike the refreshing breezes of the sea after a hot day.

The Alps terminate by a much more rapid descent on the side of Piedmont than of Savoy, after which the traveller finds himself in a plain, which is by no means the case on the other side, where the surface of the earth, for a considerable distance, might be compared to the enormous waves to some great ocean in a storm. On both sides, the effects of an immense body of water, in rapid motion, at some distant period of time, are very apparent from circumstances which my former descriptions, if you have not forgotten them, will suggest to you. As soon as the charm of breathing the air of Italy had a little subsided, I began to be struck with the knavery and imposition of the few people we had any thing to do with, with the number of beggars in the small towns, and with the apparent poverty and wretchedness of the inhabitants, in what appeared one of the most fertile countries I had seen, where agriculture and the science of irrigation (and I think it deserves the name of science) seemed so well understood; and we observed that the windows, and frequently the doors of houses, were fortified by iron bars.

The Piedmontese countenance is, very generally, an animated one, but it too generally seems connected with that sort of imagination which would make a man an active member of a troop of banditti; hundreds might sit for the picture of Gil Blas's Captain Rolando. Those I saw at work in the fields were generally ragged, and had a hungry look; one poor man was ploughing, with a miserable horse and a little half-starved cow fastened to

the same yoke. The drivers of carts and waggons were generally fast asleep on their loads. We now began to study the language, as Dean Swift somewhere mentions his studying poetry on sign-posts; and though the Piedmontese be but a sort of half Italian, it was impossible not to remark its superior melody over the French of the other side of the Alps. We passed through Suze, once distinguished for its citadel; but this famous Brunetta, this key of the Alps, has been laid in ruins, and exhibits a most dreary appearance. We next passed through St. Antonin, and stopped for a night at St. Ambrosio, where the church, though small, appeared to your brother and myself the very perfection of architecture. There were some good pictures, too, over the several altars, and we were now, we felt ourselves, in a country where the arts had long been cultivated. The valley which had gradually widened, was here about a mile and a half across, and the two projecting branches of the Alps were seen to terminate abruptly.

On the opposite mountain, which is called mount Picheriano, stand the very respectable remains of the Abbey of St. Michael, the monks of which having refused to submit to some new regulation towards the end of the sixteenth century, and change their mode of living, which was thought too worldly and luxurious, were removed to other convents, and their abbey deserted. I have seen nothing in Europe more calculated to impress the mind with awe, than this ancient religious house, seated on a pinnacle, which rises full sixteen hundred feet perpendicularly above the streets of St. Ambrosio. The church is in very good repair, and a great part of the abbey habitable; from about the centre of it there descends a stair-case between a double row of tombs into a spacious vault below, and there, placed on a projection from the wall, are seen the dead of former times in the habit of their order; they are such probably as were removed from the tombs where they were first placed, in order to make room for others of their brethren, and the bones, which are scattered about the immense floor, show that the removal was frequently destructive to what remained of the human frame in these wretched objects. A venerable Benedictine has chosen this place for his residence, and stays here through the year, with another individual who rings the bell of the church at certain hours, and assists the good man in celebrating mass. He is said to be in comfortable circumstances, and to receive, with great hospitality, such as choose to visit him.

The approach to Turin is by a level road, which was formerly shaded by a double row of trees, but the greater part of them have been sacrificed at different times to the wants of the French or Russians, who were quartered in the neighbourhood. Turin,

which is interesting from its great antiquity, being besieged and taken by Hannibal, has long been distinguished as the residence of several eminent artists. It is a very handsome place of seventy or eighty thousand souls. The greater part of the streets cross each other at right angles, and as the houses of the one by which we entered, were set off by tapestry let down from the windows in honour of the Fête Dieu, we thought it by far the most superb city we had seen in Europe. We joined the crowd at mass in the great church, and stood behind the soldiers who were drawn up as it passed. Such pomp of exterior worship, such paganism, and so little devotion, quite put me out of conceit with the Roman Catholic system; and the coarse jokes of the soldiers, who were kept from their dinner, expressed how little they felt themselves concerned in what was going on, or respected the occasion of their being under arms.

The Superga is an elegant church built on a high hill, in the neighbourhood of Turin; it is much admired for the architecture, for the handsome pillars which support the dome, and for the pictures and statues which it contains. In the vault below, which on any other occasion might pass for a handsome place of worship, are the tombs of several of the kings of Sardinia. That of Victor Amadeus attracted our attention above all, both from admiration of that great prince, who contributed so much to enlarge the possessions of which his posterity has been despoiled, and for the admirable sculpture which adorns it.

From the cupola, or top of the dome, the view is carried over an extensive country, either of plains or of moderate hills, and is bounded on two sides by the Alps, where the various passages by which different armies have entered Italy, from the time of Hannibal to that of Napoleon may be traced. A variety of towns and villages are also spread out under the observer, or appear to bound the horizon.

From Turin we made a short day's journey to Cigliano, and entering the new Italian kingdom near Vercelli, proceeded through Novarra and Buffalona to Milan. There is no part of Europe, perhaps, where the rivers are more destructive in their inundations than in Italy, and yet none where the inhabitants know so well how to avail themselves of water in the cultivation of their lands; where a stream descends from neighbouring mountains, it is generally with great rapidity, and it is easy, if the means and knowledge is possessed, to give such a direction to a portion of it, as, with less fall, will carry it gently along to any part of the country where it may be wanted. The canals which have been constructed for this purpose in Italy, serve also, in many instances, as a mode of conveyance for merchandize, and for the produce of the soil. In rising from the low grounds

of the Sesia, we passed three of them at the distance of some hundred yards from each other; they were like artificial rivers more than canals, and must, in the course of their return to the parent stream, communicate the benefits of irrigation to a prodigious extent; they afford, also, a great facility to the establishment of various sorts of mills. One advantage which the Italians derive from the diffusion of water, is the facility of cultivating rice. Their mode of culture is a very different one from that practised in Carolina, the grain being sown at broad-cast, and the land kept continually flowed.

The labouring people, both in Piedmont and in the Milanese, make a more miserable appearance than our negroes; they are as badly clothed, and scarcely eat meat from one year's end to another. Their misery does not, I presume, arise from their not being owners of the soil they till, but from the circumstance of their not holding their farms directly of the proprietor; a middle man steps in between, and he, as you may suppose, has his fortune to make, and the expense of some luxury to defray. Great possessions and large farms may and do contribute to many improvements in canals, in machinery, and in the breed of cattle, *but there is a sort of oppression arising out of them, which the law might, I should think, prevent, and they are fatal to the increase of the better sort of peasantry.*

Our roads on the confines of Piedmont and the Milanese led through a country of many rivers. These are generally crossed on bridges of boats, and are extremely rapid; the Tesino is particularly so, and the neighbouring low grounds have all the appearance of being frequently overflowed.

The neighbourhood of the Tesino was frequently, in former times, the scene of robbery and assassination, for the river being the boundary of the two states, it was easy for a robber or an assassin to elude the pursuit of the officers of justice. Some of these wretches had such abominable countenances, that they haunted our imagination for several days afterwards, and particularly when we were later than usual in arriving at our inn. Our driver showed us a place not far from the Tesino, where the Diligence had been fired on two years ago; the coachman, a postillion, and the guard, with three inside passengers, were killed, but the horses taking fright, ran away with the carriage to the next post-house, and thus saved a considerable sum of money, which had been the object of the villains who fired. The inns, as I said, are tolerable, they are generally very large buildings with long corridors, which give privacy to the rooms, and a balcony in front; and as to the living, it did for hungry travellers, who piqued themselves upon not being very delicate. The dishes, generally, contained what appeared like scraps, and I do not be-

lieve that a joint of meat, in any shape whatsoever, was a thing ever heard of out of the butcher's shop.

We now approached the ancient city of Milan, over a well-cultivated plain; but I saw no country-seats, and met with no travellers. There were some loaded carts and waggons, the drivers of which, or rather they who ought to have been the drivers, were fast asleep, and a few people at work in the fields who looked wretchedly. The sound of the French language was no longer heard, and we were struck with the soft terminations and melodious flow of the Italian, whenever we passed a village, and heard persons conversing. A beggar, asking charity, made use of words which seemed to command it, and even the accents of a coachman talking to his horses were delightful; they were such as a lover might be satisfied to make use of in pouring out his heart to his mistress. I began, by degrees, to recollect the little I had formerly learned of the Italian, and we made out better than you would imagine.

Milan is a large and well-built city, containing upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants; they appeared to me to be a handsome race of luxurious people, and I saw a great many splendid equipages in the streets, and many marks of opulence. We arrived early in the morning of Sunday, and having a valet de place as a guide, went immediately after to the cathedral, which nearly fills up one side of a large square. It is an immense building, and covered as far as it is finished with marble. It looks more like a mountain than a church; it was with difficulty we made our way through a crowd in the square. They were collected in groups, and were some of them listening to three balled singers on a temporary stage, while others were diverted by a puppet-show, and others again were attentive to some experiments which a travelling natural philosopher was making with an electrical apparatus.

It needed not all the pomp and dignity of the Catholic worship, to impress the mind with religious awe on entering the Cathedral, which is four hundred and eighty-six feet in length, and broad in proportion. A dome is suspended over head in the centre, at the height of two hundred and fifty-seven feet, and fifty-six columns of ninety feet in length, and twenty-six round, seem but of a proportionate size to the mighty mass which they support; four of these columns are of oriental granite, and of a single piece. If the length and breadth of this great Cathedral could be accurately laid down on the lawn before the door, and you could represent to yourself a church like that of St. Michael, in Charles-town, placed on the pavement, and reaching only to within one hundred feet of what we should call the ceiling in a building of another sort, your imagination would much more easily attain to

the idea of greatness I mean to convey; and do but trace a circle of twenty-six feet upon the grass, if you wish to conceive an idea of the size of the columns. There are a number of altars to different saints along the sides of the Cathedral, at which different individuals may be seen offering up their devotions, according, no doubt, to the opinion of the Saint's credit in heaven, or the particular case in human affairs, or the particular disorder in the human body, to which he has most frequently extended his influence in a miraculous manner.

The hospital, which we next visited, is upon a very great and liberal scale. In a long room, the doors of which are thrown open at a certain hour every day, we saw a double row of very clean beds, where the sick appeared to be many of them waited upon by their own children.

We saw some good sculpture, and a great many good pictures; but I regretted that the talents of such distinguished artists should have been employed upon imaginary miracles and martyrdoms. At night we went to the great opera, for which we had in some measure prepared ourselves by reading the piece that was to be performed, but we by no means expected such a theatre. There were six rows of boxes, of thirty-six in each, besides an extensive pit, and an orchestra where there seemed at least fifty performers.

The boxes are private property, and only lighted as it may suit the conveniency of those who occupy them, except that which was destined for the royal family, of which none of the illustrious individuals were present upon this occasion; but the box attracted universal admiration, and gave me an idea of that recess in a Chinese palace, where, on particular days, the divine spirit of the emperor is supposed to be present, though his person be at the distance of several leagues. There was a ballet, and a great deal of dancing in the Italian style, which Arthur Young has very happily described. It was quite a tempest of agility, and not a great way removed from tumbling; the principal man struck his forehead repeatedly with his feet, and the principal woman seemed to take a pleasure and a pride in showing more of her form than I care for describing. The dancing at Bourdeaux was decency in comparison. The Italians excel in pantomime, and with their fine eyes, expressive countenances, and extreme agility, are able to convey any meaning in dumb show as if they spoke; but I will venture to assert, that their taste in dancing is false and licentious.

There is a great deal of literature, I am told, both in Milan and in Turin, and men of distinguished talents, who keep pace with the rest of Europe in the improvement of every art, and the progress of the sciences,

## LETTER XV.

WE quitted Milan on the evening of the fourth day after our arrival, and took the road to Sesto, which you will find on any map of Lombardy. It is situated on the spot where the Tesino, after having principally contributed to form the Lac Maggiore, reassumes its course again towards the sea, as the Rhone does at Geneva. I was surprised to find a tract of uncultivated country near Gallarate, which the government was willing to make grants of, I was told, to any one that presented himself. It was the first time I had seen in Europe, what we, in America, call vacant land, and to complete my astonishment, the soil was good, and the climate delightful, but there was no command of water for irrigation; it had been formerly cultivated, but was abandoned, owing, it is said, to a burdensome imposition of taxes, and was likely to remain for years in its present situation. La Land, who travelled thirty years ago, in the Milanese, says, that land has sold as high as 2263 livres the arpent, or acre, but that the price varied, in general, according to the quality, and convenience for irrigation, from 158 livres to 57. Rice land could then be hired at 15 livres the arpent, or acre, and the average profit arising from agriculture was  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the capital.

Sesto is a small place, which had nothing to detain us, and we embarked in a boat navigated by four stout men, all of whom rowed standing erect with their faces to the prow, and two had an oar in either hand. We went with great velocity, and had soon got out of the current, which is perceivable at the extremity of the lake, to where it was spread out in a smooth expanse, and diversified here and there by a sail and by the towns and villages which crown its banks. Two of these little towns in particular, attracted our attention; these were Angera and Arona, in face of each other.

The steep hill sides were chiefly in vineyards, and the houses which were scattered over their surface appeared more like places of retreat in the summer, to the opulent gentry of Milan, than dwelling places of farmers. We landed at Arona and found a small, and rather a gloomy town, with a harbour in which a merchant ship might barely turn round, but which is sufficiently spacious for the barks which navigate the lake. The inhabitants value themselves on the antiquity of their city, and are persuaded, it seems, that the Aronaim alluded to by the prophet Isaiah, see chap. 15, verse —, is no other but their identical city of Arona, and I believe really it would be difficult to prove the contrary. The boatmen, who seemed afraid of our thinking too well of Arona, told us, that there was a continued and miraculous interference of heaven near Angera, which was also worth our attention; an immense rock seems suspended almost on the brink

of a declivity which overhangs the convent, and is kept from yielding to the natural tendency of all heavy bodies, by the intercession and influence of a female saint.

We found a number of labourers working with great spirit upon the new road near Arona, and ascended a neighbouring hill in order to see the statue of St. Charles Borromeo. This gigantic statue is sixty-six feet in height, upon a pedestal of forty-six feet, and was erected in the year 1697, at the joint expense of the neighbouring country and of the Borromeo family. The head and arms are of bronze cast, and the remainder of beaten copper. The Saint is placed, with great propriety, in front of a college, which owes its foundation to his liberality, and love of learning; and his right hand stretched forth, in the act of blessing the waters of the lake, must be a comfortable sight to these fair-weather sailors, when they are caught out a few miles from shore by a gale of wind. The lake to them is an ocean, they measure the breadth of it with an eye of terror, and their fears convert every squall into a tempest. There were some workmen repairing the corner of the pedestal, who showed us a skirt of his garment, under which a person must insinuate himself who is desirous of mounting upon the Saint's head. They told us, with a degree of ludicrous precision, of the proportions of this monstrous head, how many men might sit in it around a table, how much at ease F—— and I might be in the two nostrils, and that a person standing upon one of the eye-brows, could barely reach the top of the Saint's cap.

We embarked again at the foot of the hill, and a breeze springing up, we spread our sail, and leaving the length of the lake to the extent of about fifty miles upon our right, stood for the gulf at the western extremity, in which are situated the Borromeo Islands. These are four in number. One of them is unimproved; another called *Isola Pescatoria*, is covered by a little fishing town, and two, known by the name of *Isola Madre*, and *Isola Bella*, have for many years attracted the admiration of travellers.

It was the pride and pleasure of a count Borromeo, who lived towards the end of the sixteenth century, to convert two naked rocky islands of a few acres, into what the imagination of every beholder has been embarrassed to find terms capable of expressing his admiration of. We landed first at *Isola Bella*, and having viewed the palace, proceeded through groves of evergreens, many of which I perceived to be of American origin, to the other extremity of the island; this is covered by a construction of masonry on vaults, which support a succession of terraces receding as they rise one above the other, to the aggregate height of upwards of one hundred feet, where the whole is



crowned by a platform, and surrounded by a balustrade, and adorned with statues. Your imagination may supply the walls of the various terraces, which are ten in number, with all the beautiful varieties of the orange tribe in espaliers; of these, some were in full bearing, and others in blossom, and the whole, as I looked down upon it from the platform, had more the appearance of fairy land, than any thing I ever beheld. At a little distance on one side we saw the Isola Madre, where there are also terraces, with lemons and oranges, shady groves, and a lawn that leads down to the brink of the water from a handsome house, and the Isola Pescatoria on the other. The little town that covers this last is said to contain five hundred souls; the men gain their living by fishing, and the women employ themselves in making and mending nets. The possession of an acre or two on the main land, crowns the hopes of a long life among these simple and industrious people. There are several towns also spread along the banks of the lake, and the view after having been gratified with the wonders of art and nature united in so small a compass, after having reposed upon the clear unruffled expanse of a beautiful sheet of water in every direction, loses itself in the dark valleys and amid the snowy eminences of the neighbouring Alps.

The palace of the Count might serve for the residence of a royal family; \* gilding and marble, the costliest furniture and the finest mirrors are to be admired in every room, and there are several pictures done by eminent masters. The lower suite of rooms is in a style particularly adapted to a hot climate, the walls, the pillars that support the ceiling, and the ceiling itself, as well as the floor, are of the variously-coloured pebbles of the lake, which are wedged closely to each other without cement and with a great deal of taste. The fancy of a poet could not devise a residence more suited to the genius of the place. The Count, who is lord paramount of the whole lake, very seldom resides here, and makes the most liberal use of his extensive rights, and his vassals, who are perhaps five hundred in number, are ready at a word to man his Gondolas, or to render any service he requires of them. They are sure to wait upon him also, with the best of what they get, either in the lake or at the chase. The generality of travellers who visit these fortunate Islands, prefer the happy imitation of nature in the Isola Madre, to all the splendour of the Isola Bella. They are amused also with the number of pheasants that are reared there, and who live at large, except that food is provided for them. Five men were every day employed, the gardener told me, in collecting ant hills upon the main, these are thrown toge-

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\* It was lately occupied by Queen Caroline of England.

ther into a large box, *where the poor ants make out as well as they can in a state of horrible confusion until they are given out to the young pheasants, who devour thousands at a meal, both of the animal itself and of what is improperly called their eggs.* We took a last look at these Islands with a degree of regret.

Those of the inhabitants of Isola Bella whom I saw, and who were not in the service of the Count, appeared a poor and dirty race of mortals ; I should rather take them, if I were disposed to be poetic, for the sad objects on which some treacherous divinity, the mistress of this fair island, had exercised her wrath, as Calypso did upon the companions of Ulysses.

We now proceeded to the extremity of the lake, and entering a canal which has been dug within these few years, soon found ourselves in the lake of Mergozzo, which is of very inferior dimensions to the one we had quitted. The little town that gives name to the lake presented itself at the upper end before us, and with the number of fishing boats which were drawn up on the strand, it had to our imagination the appearance of a sea-port in miniature. On the back-ground were the lofty mountains, among which we knew that our road was to wind, and we endeavoured to prepare ourselves for the fatigues of the next day, by enjoying the comforts of a tolerable inn.

The road which has been carried on by the orders of Napoleon, as Emperor and King, passes from Arona along the lake, leaves Mergozzo upon the right, and follows the course of the Tosa, making almost a right angle at Vogogna, and another near Maserà by Transquera and Gondo, to the Vallaison village of Simplebergh or Simpliedorf, which the Italians have softened into Sempione, and the French perverted into Simplon, from thence it descends into the valley of the Rhone, joining the old high road till beyond Martigny, it then inclines to the south and reaches the lake of Geneva near Meillere. I admire, and believe I have expressed it before, the sublime simplicity of being guided by nature as far as it is compatible with art. A beautiful terrace, (I can call it by no other name,) bounded by a parapet wall, for the safety of travellers, now runs along the Tosa, preserving nearly the same distance from the level of the water the whole way. The degree of fall which converts a stream into a roving torrent, is but a gentle descent to the traveller, and he moves along with safety and with comfort, where a boat would be dashed to pieces in a moment. It seems to be the difference between the maturity of reason, and those headlong passions which often hurry man to destruction. The bridges upon this road are handsome ; subterranean passages carry off the waters that might injure it, and where the declivity is perpendicular, a tunnel is cut, through which the road passes. Nearly fifty miles of this part of the work, including the tunnels,

is through the wildest, and, to appearance, most inaccessible portion of the Alps, and could only be effected by mining, and so well has the level been originally taken and attended to, that there is but one slope of ascent on either side, although the road rises to nearly 7000 feet above the southern point of departure, a degree of accuracy and perfection which I did not suppose within the means of Practical Geometry.\*

Placing yourself at Margozzo, a line due north carries you in twenty, or twenty-five miles, to the passage of M. de Saussure on his way from the sources of the Rhone in the Vallais into the Val Maggia, or Rheintal, the people of these countries are now free, and forming part of a Canton, are annexed to Switzerland and the Helvetic Union, the inhabitants of which, by the strangest of all political absurdities, were the subjects of the democratic Cantons of Switzerland. M. de Saussure passed from Bosco, where, for three months in the winter, the sun is never seen, to Cerentino, where the inhabitants have the sun for three hours, while their neighbours are in darkness, and to Cevio, which you will find by following the stream that runs down the Val Maggia towards the lake, leaving Locarno a little on the left.

After a few miles along an obscure path, we joined the new road upon the side of the Tosa, and proceeded west as far as Anzasca. We then turned due north, and were before one o'clock at Duoma d'Ossola; a continuation of our first direction would have carried us to Macaguaga, which I mentioned to you in a former letter. The towns and villages we passed on the road were of a better appearance than I had expected, and the sides of the mountains, though steep, were cultivated with the utmost care, wherever the soil would admit of it. The favourite culture appeared to be the vine, and there were numbers of walnut-trees, which here, as well as in Savoy and Italy, are much prized for the oil which the nuts afford; it supplies the place of olive-oil, is more agreeable to the taste, but less digestible. Duoma d'Ossola is a small, but very ancient town, with walls and a castle in ruins; in former times, which we too often speak of as better than the present, the inhabitants were exposed to the incursions of the Val-laisans, and a great many dismal accounts are to be found in history, of the injuries which these ignorant and ferocious people mutually inflicted.

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\* I have since been informed by the principal engineer, that the rise and the fall on the whole of the road is upon an average four and a half inches in six feet. The bridges are from seventy to ninety feet above the surface of the torrents they cross. The estimate, now founded upon experience, of the expense of the whole undertaking from the lake of Geneva to near Sesto, a distance of about one hundred and thirty miles, is ten millions of livres; the undertakers, it is thought, will clear about one hundred thousand.

The road which passes these ancient and obscure places, is by no means an agreeable circumstance to the generality of the inhabitants ; it exposes their antique manners to the observation of mankind, and has already introduced the luxury of eating meat, and of baking their bread more than once a year. They begin to feel too, how troublesome it is to have soldiers billeted upon them, and to regret the good old time, when there was no restraint to smuggling.

The road turned to the west shortly after we left Duoma d'Osola, and we now found ourselves in a narrow valley, the naked sides of which bid defiance to every species of industry ; it seemed as if a mass of rock had been cleft by some superior power. We stopped a moment at Gondo, which consists but of two or three houses, and is in the wildest part of the valley ; the only way into the room of the inn was through the stable, and when we got up stairs, the figures whom we saw playing at cards around a table, were such as the imagination might easily have converted into robbers and assassins. They were miners, who had been at work all the day upon the road, and were as black as smoke and gunpowder could make them. I saw here not the smallest appearance of cultivation, the mountains were bleak and barren, and that which arose immediately behind the house, exhibited a precipice of at least three thousand feet.

We were now to take our leave of the beautiful Italian language. Gondo is on the confines of the Milanese. We soon began to hear German spoken, and at Sempione, or Sempelendorff, which is in the Vallaisan territory, it was difficult to find a person who spoke any other language. I am sure it took us at least five minutes to make the servant of the house comprehend that we wanted a light. The variety in the modes of dress of the women is still greater, and though not as important, to the full as unaccountable. Those of the Margozzo and in the Milanese in general, had their hair rolled up, and confined on the back of the head with a double-headed skewer, with smaller skewers or bodkins passing through the centre to a rim, which gave the whole the appearance of a small carriage wheel ; but at a little distance to the west of Tosa, we found the women in their shift sleeves, and their hair in a wreath on the top of their head, with little knots of ribbon pendant, and shortly after they had the appearance of Creoles, with their heads tied up in coloured handkerchiefs. At Sempelendorff, their heads were again uncovered, and the hair confined with an ornament not unlike the Milanese fashion ; and so constant are they to their local customs, that as a modern author very well observes, a female head becomes a kind of geographical index.

Sempelendorff is about four thousand feet above the lake of Geneva ; it is a small village surrounded by fine pastures, and between

lofty eminences, where the snow resists the heat of the longest and hottest summer. There were some remains of avalanches on several parts of the road as we came along, and the probability is, these falling masses will render it unsafe, during by far the greater part of the year. The Vallaisans say, and probably with a degree of satisfaction, that it will not be possible to travel this way during more than three months out of the twelve.

We discharged our horses at Simpelendorff, and proceeded the next morning on foot to cross the mountain, which the French call the Simplon. Its utmost elevation, on the road I mean, is about one thousand feet above the village. The view is rather savage than sublime. The mountain sides are of bare rocks, and the extremities of several small glaciers are seen connected with their snowy extremities.

At a mile or two from the village, we passed a solitary house, which now serves as a *hospice*; I know no word for such a place in England. It was formerly the temporary residence of a Vallaisan gentleman, who having made a large fortune in trade, was suddenly stript of a greater part of it in an insurrection of the people. They had always been in the custom of exercising a rude sort of Ostracism, which you will see described in Coxe; but it would surely have been wiser to have had good sumptuary laws than to have recourse to such barbarous expedients. A new hospice is to be erected, as soon as the passage shall have been completely opened; and every traveller will be entitled to a pound of bread and a cup of wine, and to such other assistance as he may stand in need of.

We stopt for an hour at a solitary little inn, at a place called the Tavernette, about half way between Brieg and Simpelendorf, and F——, who had now walked nine miles, declared to me that he had never eaten any thing so good since he had been in Europe, as the bread and cheese which the hostess put before us. She was a pretty little Vallaisan, without the least appearance of a goitre; and spoke French very well. Her husband and herself, she told me, remained there all the year, annoyed by the fall of rocks in the summer, and of avalanches in winter, but satisfied to gain a living by keeping accommodations for travellers, even in that dismal place. We now descended very rapidly, through a continued forest of pines, amid a number of clear and rapid streams, which rushing along to join the torrent that roared below, contributed to animate and diversify the scene. At length, at the distance of between two and three miles from Brieg, we began to perceive signs of cultivation; meadows and fruit-trees, and now and then a cottage succeeded, and then the valley of the Rhone became open to our view.

## LETTER XVI.

I HAD seen the Rhone a great many miles below, where it flowed along in a broad and deep, though gentle stream, through a highly cultivated plain, and beneath ancient walls ; but here it seemed a torrent discoloured by the soil, and by rocky substances, which it hurried along, and as injurious by the marshes it occasioned, as by the fields which it overflowed. There was all the difference which one conceives between the rudeness of the middle ages, and the polished gentleness of modern courts ; between Count Borromeo, diffusing happiness on all around from his paradise of Isola Bella, and an ancient baron sallying forth from his castle to despoil the traveller who passed within his view.

The hill sides of the valley were well cultivated and thickly inhabited, and the little town of Brieg would have appeared to advantage, had it not been for the monstrous ornament of tin, in the shape of a pear, which encumbered the steeple of the church, and the roofs of all the principal houses ; it seemed as if the taste of the inhabitants had been corrupted by the daily sight of goitres. On our way to the town, we passed what had been two flourishing villages, of which, however, nothing now remained but the walls of ruined houses ; the inhabitants distinguished themselves by their adherence to the cause of their country in 1801 ; they had assisted in the defence of the intrenchments at Leuck, which cost their invaders so many lives. Such of them as remained alive, had been hunted down like wild beasts, their houses had been burnt, and their families scattered to look for shelter in the mountains.

A road is carried through the whole extent of their country, from the lake of Geneva to the borders of the Milanese, without their being consulted upon the subject, or their interest or convenience in any degree attended to. Soldiers who pass, are billeted upon the inhabitants, and their baggage is transported in carts or cars, which are put in requisition for that purpose.

At Visp, or Vieshback, we procured a car, which is a small open waggon, drawn by one horse ; in the middle was a coarse seat, suspended by ropes to the sides, and the driver sat in front upon a bundle of hay. There was nothing very ostentatious in this mode of conveyance, and you will think, perhaps, that it was hardly creditable, but it was the best we could find, and it had even charms for us who had walked four and twenty miles.

No caprice of a magician, such as we see exemplified in a Harlequin farce, could produce greater contrasts than in the mountains and valleys of this country exhibit. From a well cul-

tivated hill side, the view descends into a narrow plain, where all the evils of marsh miasmata and stagnant air are combined to degrade the race of man, or rises to the bleak and fantastic ridges of the Alps; and the short space of two hours would be sufficient to convey the traveller from the shade of fig-trees and pomegranates to the regions of eternal winter.

It may be interesting to the reader to learn the fate of this much oppressed and obscure republic. The effects of the counter revolution in France extended even to the Vallais, which now, by the determination of the Congress of Vienna, forms a republic, without any distinction of right between the upper and the lower Vallais, divided into thirteen districts, each of which has a municipal council for the regulation of its peculiar concerns, and inferior tribunals, like our district courts, and sends four representatives to the General Council, which is the legislative body, and from which an Executive Council is elected. The Bishop sends four representatives, or attends in person, with the right of four votes. The inhabitants are said to have shown very little mercy to the French who fell into their power when they were enabled to reassume their independence. I should have mentioned, also, that the Vallais is now a member of the Helvetic Union, not as an ally, which was its situation previously to the French revolution, but as one of the twenty Cantons.

Our course was nearly west in the direction of the Rhone, and though the night came upon us, while we had still several miles to go, our conductor and his horse, who were perfectly acquainted with the road, went as rapidly down hill as if it had been mid-day. We now and then approached the river, which seemed to rush along with a degree of frightful velocity, and crossed the beds of several torrents.

At length we crossed the Rhone, and arrived at Sider, where the house was so full, that all the accommodation we could procure was a mattress spread upon the floor of a room, where there were already three beds with each two people in it, besides a large dog, who lay at the feet of one of the persons asleep. It would require the talents of Scarron to paint some of the adventures of such a night. Once I was awakened by a watchman chaunting the hour in barbarous sounds under the window, and another time by a battle between the dog and a person who came into the room, in order to find a place to lay himself down. We got to Sion early the next morning through a well-cultivated country: the valley was become broader, some attempts had been made to resist the devastations of the Rhone, and the vineyards and corn-fields extended as high as cultivation could effect any thing, up the opposite mountains. The view was diversified too, by several little conical hills, which rise from

between forty and fifty to two hundred feet above the surface of the valley ; some circumstance of situation has enabled them to resist the violence of the river, but as they consist altogether, it seems, of pebbles from all the various sorts of rocks which are to be found in the neighbouring mountains, they originally must have been deposited here by the water at some distant period. The bailiff of Cevio was certainly in the right ; the world is certainly much older than people make it. Sion is a small, but well built town ; it was taken by storm in 1801, and suffered all that towns generally do upon such occasions.

I remember our thinking war a very dreadful calamity in America, but there is no more comparison between our revolutionary war, and the wars of Europe, that of the Vallais, and of Switzerland in particular, than between the sports of children and the fight of devils. A humane lady, whom I know, came into this country after the campaign of 1801, with various articles, and with money, which she had collected in addition to what she herself liberally supplied. Many villages had been burnt, and the inhabitants had disappeared ; in others, where the devastation had not been so general, she found some old people, some sick of both sexes, several wounded men, and numbers of children who knew nothing of their parents, and were in a state of the most deplorable want. All of them must have perished, the old, the sick, the wounded, and the children, had she not brought them food and clothes. I say nothing to you of indignities worse than death, which had been inflicted, they surpass all description.

We procured another car at Sion, and soon arrived at the little town of St. Pierre, where, as if by magic, every body spoke French, and the mistress of the house declared to me that she had not the least idea of German. This difference of language has been the source of great unhappiness in Switzerland and the neighbouring countries, and particularly where it existed, as in the Vallais, between those who held the sovereign power and their subjects. We now went, for the first time, into a Vallaisan church, and it was melancholy to see the rudely-carved images set off with a little frippery and tinsel, which bore the names of some of the most respectable of the celestial Hierarchy. Great pains have been taken to point out the resemblance of many usages of the Roman church, with those of Paganism ; and I can conceive how good policy required, that as many of the ancient ceremonies should be retained, as were not inconsistent with Christianity ;\* but the transmission of honour and admiration

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\* There once stood a temple of Diana on the spot where the church of St. Paul's now stands in London, and it was customary, as low down as the reign of  
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which has taken place is, in some cases, ludicrous. St. Philip and St. James have assumed the places of Ceres and Flora, our sacred festival of Christmas represents the feasts of Bacchus and of Saturn. Moses, as Pope observes, has usurped the ensigns of Pan, and the Virgin has succeeded to the places of Diana, of Juno Lucina, and even of Venus, all graceless as she was. It is to the Virgin that seamen offer up their prayers in a storm, it is to her that those who have been saved from shipwreck offer up their thanks, and mothers with their infant children in their arms, prostrate themselves before her altar, in silent and grateful adoration. If it should appear singular that the holy Virgin should thus be made to exercise some of the prerogatives of the Pagan Venus, it is no less so, that they should have descended to this last personage from the mother of the God Fo in Hindoo Mythology.—“The Queen of Heaven, who stills the waves of the sea and allays storms.” Whilst we admire the inventive genius of man in the improvement of the arts of life, we cannot but be struck with his having condescended to borrow, from one generation to another, the trifling embellishments of superstition. The Jesuits are said to have lost all patience, when first they saw the Priests of Fo counting their beads, and beheld the holy Mother in a recess at the back of the altar, covered with a silken veil to hide her from common observation, with a child at her bosom, and rays of glory around her head. The devil, they said, must have inspired these Pagans with such ideas on purpose to mortify them.

Two roads descend into the valley of the Rhone near Martigny. The one is from Chamouny, over the Col de Balme, and the other over the great St. Bernard. This last was the one made use of by Napoleon for the passage of his army, in 1801; an undertaking in which a bold originality of enterprise was aided by the powers of an intelligent and vigorous execution; 600, 800, and 1000 livres had been previously offered for the transportation across the mountain of pieces of artillery, according to their calibre, and the whole peasantry of the neighbourhood were set in motion; trees hollowed into troughs, received the guns, the peasants harnessed themselves, the soldiers volunteered their services, and the astonishing spectacle was afforded, of an army marching by large detachments with all the cumbrous apparatus of war along the winding narrow path of a mountain, and where it rises to the height of 7500 feet above its base. In the narrow plain, at that height, is a hospice; it has existed for many centuries, and the good fathers, who reside in this, the loftiest of all

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Henry the VIIIth, on a certain day of every year to place a Stag's head upon the altar.

human habitations, have been ever distinguished for their active zeal in behalf of the unfortunate, and for their kindness and hospitality to persons of all nations and of all religions. The fall of an avalanche, which has obstructed the road, or a snow storm of uncommon violence, is a call upon their humanity. They sally forth, from their convent, and, aided by the sagacity of their dogs, very frequently discover a way-worn traveller, either buried beneath a heap of drifted snow, or seated in all the bitterness of despair on the brink of some frightful precipice. "Figure to yourself" says Chateaubriand, "the sensation of him who, uncertain what course to pursue, amid the snows of the mountain, hears the cheerful sound of the convent bell at a distance, or sees a person approach, in whose countenance, zeal, courage, and humanity, are blended with piety."



*A Dog carrying a lost Child to the Convent.*

Notwithstanding the active zeal of these good fathers, some traveller is frequently the victim of an avalanche or of the drifted snow, and numbers suffer in their limbs from the cold of these upper regions, where it freezes in August. The consumption of fire-wood is, I am told, very great, and the expense of procuring it must be considerable, as it is brought on mules from a distance of at least twelve miles, and along a road which is practicable for six weeks only during the whole year. The good sense of the first Consul had pointed out to him the propriety of protecting these respectable men, at the same time that he rendered them useful to his army; they were furnished with money, that they might provide every thing in time, which the soldiers could properly have occasion for, and a frugal, but plentiful, repast, was always ready for each detachment, as it arrived. It must have been an interesting sight to have beheld some thousands of men, seated in circles upon this little plain, amid scenes of eternal winter, and waited upon by the fathers of the convent. The whole of the passage was effected in three days, and without the loss of a man. The citadel, which commanded the descent into the plain, was too scantily supplied with ammunition to oppose any serious obstacle.

Our journey from Bex to Morge, through the finest part of the Pays de Vaud, was on a Sunday, and in good weather, after two or three days of rain; the roads were filled with people; a number were dancing in a meadow, by the lake side; it was a picture of happiness.\*

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## LETTER XVII.

I PROMISED to say something more of the agriculture of Piedmont, and I do so with the more pleasure, as the observations of others, such as I was able, in some measure, to verify, have rendered the task a very easy one, and as it resembles so nearly that of S. Carolina. Their labourers live almost exclusively as our negroes do, on Indian corn or Meliga, and a great deal of labour and attention is bestowed on this useful plant, and the more so, as the Piedmontese planter has discovered the happy art of interesting his hired servants in the culture of it. Each of them undertakes a certain number of acres, which he cultivates when he can be spared from his master's work; his wife and children assist him, and sometimes a passing wanderer, who can handle a hoe, or any of the neighbouring poor who are disposed to work, may be had upon easy terms.

Of the produce of the land so cultivated, he gets a third, which forms a comfortable addition to his wages. The land intended for Indian corn is always well manured, and the plant receives at least three hand hoeings, besides being earthed up; it is even watered in dry seasons, where water can be commanded, by flowing the interval between the beds. The leaves, or, as we call them in America, the blades, are never stripped, or the tops cut, but when the grain has been harvested, the whole plant is pulled up, and bundles are made of it, to be reserved for the use of the cattle in the winter. An emine, or about twenty-one quarts, of Indian corn is sown to the journal, which is somewhat less than the English acre, (being as 39,108 are to 43,560) and the average produce is from 30 to 54 eminences, or from 20 to between 30 and 40 bushels to the acre. A crop of rye, sown at broad-cast, frequently succeeds the Meliga, and a change of crop, for the succeeding season, is sometimes made by vetches, or by beans of the sort we plant

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\* Note added by an inhabitant of the Pays de Vaud.—The people of the Pays de Vaud may have been wrong on some occasions, but that policy cannot be had which has led to so advantageous a change in their situation. All titles and fendal services have been redeemed. The people, who were once subjects, are now citizens; and justice is brought to their own doors, and administered by magistrates of their own choice, and agreeably to laws of their own making.

among our corn in America : of these it is not unusual to make thirty emines to the journal. To rye sometimes succeeds the quarantaine, or rare-ripe corn, the field is then well ploughed and manured, and wheat is sown at the rate of two and a half bushels to the acre. Both wheat and rye are for the most part harvested by contract, at ten per cent, in kind ; the proprietor furnishing carts and the contractor taking off little more than the ear of the plant. The stubble is afterwards mowed. The grain when reaped is generally separated from the straw, by threshing with light flails on a clay floor. I say generally, for it is sometimes trodden out by horses. Both methods indeed are frequently had recourse to, and in either case the work is sometimes performed by night, in order to avoid the heat of the day. Thirteen men with twenty-four horses, in six days, have cut, transported to the barn yard, threshed, winnowed, and measured the produce of 18 acres. An equal number of negroes, with all the assistance of boats, would have been barely able to *harvest* only the same quantity of rice, in the same time. To wheat there frequently succeeds clover, though it is an article in no great estimation, for the command of water enables the farmer to have as much meadow as he pleases, and with very little trouble. Hemp, though it grows very well in Piedmont, is never planted as an article of sale, but in the way cotton is in the upper part of Virginia, in the neighbourhood of some house, and for domestic purposes.

Great quantities of rape-seed are made, and with hardly any attention, but what is sufficient to protect it from the cattle. The produce of an acre, in rape-seed, is generally worth between six and seven pounds sterling. It would be more generally attended to, were it not for the quantity of walnuts, which furnish an oil that is sold for between six and eight French sous a pint, and this, when made, without having been heated, is not unwholesome, and is always far more agreeable to the taste than rape oil, which last is frequently, however, used in cookery, and almost always for the lamp. The marc or residue, which remains after the rape oil has been expressed, forms a cake, which serves to fatten cattle. But the article of all others which is cultivated with the most attention in Piedmont, and which, as you may easily imagine, I was most desirous to learn the management of, is rice.

The farmer who has a proper command of running water, which he can almost any where purchase, and who destines a tract of land for rice, begins by dividing it into as many portions as are necessary, in order to preserve an exact level in each ; and this he does with the assistance of persons who make a profession of levelling. These portions are separated by banks about eighteen inches high, and each division is well broken up and har-

rowed. The water is afterwards let in, and kept on until the surface, to the depth of several inches, is converted into a state of mud; it is then drawn off, the rice, having been previously steeped, is immediately sown at broad-cast, and the water is brought on again. The only attention afterwards requisite, is to see that every division be kept flowed to the depth of eight or nine inches, and that the water be very slowly, but constantly, in motion, from the upper division, into which it is received at first to the lower, from which it is discharged; the communication being kept up by breaches of a proper size prepared in each bank for that purpose, in the nature of a waste-way to a mill-dam. Should a growth of weeds appear likely to injure the crop, there are labourers to be hired, who go into the water, and pull them up by the roots, and this is all the culture which the rice requires or receives. The water is withdrawn six or eight days before harvest, the rice is cut with a sickle, it is threshed, either with a flail or by horses, and having been winnowed, it is pounded, but without having been previously passed through a pair of mill-stones, as with us. The pounding machine is of a very rude construction, and such as bespeaks the very infancy of art. The mortars are small, the pestles light, and they are placed much further from the shaft than there is occasion for.

The rice, when pounded, is sifted by hand, for no Dillet has appeared among them, as yet, to introduce the inestimable advantage of the rooling skreen. The most, I was told, ever performed by their most powerful machine, was ten barrels of six hundred weight, in twenty-four hours. I had been informed that 1580lbs. at the average of S2,50 the hundred weight, of merchantable rice, was frequently made to the acre, but have reason to believe, and from the best authority, that the average crop does not much exceed half that quantity. The small rice, the flour, and the straw, go a great way towards the expense of a rice plantation in Piedmont. These, one might suppose, from the mode pursued, would not be very considerable; but the wages of the persons employed in harvesting, are three and four times, not unfrequently, greater than a labourer would receive on any other occasion. He here ventures his health, if not his life, and must be paid accordingly. And then the profits of gleaning, to which the poor of Piedmont consider themselves as entitled, by the authority of Scripture, are so considerable, that a poor man has been known to refuse any thing less than three French livres a day, if he gave up the chance of gleaning.

The rizer too, or overseer, whose employment it is to see that the different divisions are supplied with the proper quantity of water, and with a regular change of it, is well paid for his time and trouble; he receives five per cent. of the gross produce.

This mode of payment is very common, and it is not unusual for the proprietor to agree with some one, who, for a stipulated price, undertakes the whole business of harvesting, threshing, and pounding. On these occasions, he furnishes his carts, to assist in transporting the rice to the threshing-floor, and provides a pounding machine, and commonly pays one-sixth or about sixteen per cent. of the produce, to the contractor, who having provided a numerous and active gang, works day and night until the business is finished. The straw, after it has been threshed, is carefully put up in stacks and used as fodder; but the poor of the neighbourhood generally solicit permission to thresh it over again more than once. For the first time, they get a third of the grain that is produced; for the second time a half, and for the third time two-thirds. To those who have lived on a rice plantation, in Carolina, and who remember the appearance in the spring, of any place, over which rice-straw has been scattered, during the winter, it will not appear surprising, that the poor of Piedmont should be able to bestow their labour advantageously, and so repeatedly, on the same sheaves.

They make but very little wine in Piedmont, and that of an inferior quality; but the smaller proprietors of land, and the poor, derive considerable advantage from raising silk worms. Gibbon's history has informed you how this wonderful little animal was first introduced in Europe, and you know from your own experience, that it is raised upon the leaves of the mulberry, a tree which abounds in Piedmont.

The raiser of the silk worm is generally a poor man, who either purchases mulberry leaves, at so much a pound, or hires a number of trees for the season, at the rate of from thirty to forty French sous a tree; or more frequently goes halves with the proprietor of them. The average price of raw silk is about a guinea the *rup*, which is eighteen and a half pounds; there are houses where twenty *rup*s are made annually.

As the weather became cooler in the Autumn, and the beauties of our prospect were fading away, we determined to diversify the scene by a visit to Annecy, which you will easily find on the map of Savoy. It lies a little to the left of the road. F. and I had travelled along the way to Turin, which has attracted some attention from Rousseau's description of the life he led there, and his first interview with Madame de Warens.

We began to ascend, shortly after leaving Geneva, and were in a few hours on the top of mount Sion, which is the lowest of the mountains that surround the Lake. On the slope between Mount Sion and Saleve, on the side towards Geneva, is an ancient Chartreux, where the monks of St. Bruno formerly cultivated a flourishing farm, and sung psalms and said their prayers, and be-

stowed all, which their simple wants could spare, on the poor of the neighbourhood. The town contains nearly five thousand souls ; it is ill-built and dark. In former times, that is to say, before the revolution, it used to be enlivened by the sort of court which the Bishop, who still retained the title of Bishop of Geneva, held there, and by the residence of several families of nobility. The demand, too, which was occasioned for the necessaries of life, by the number of wealthy convents, gave an appearance of trade ; but the Bishop has been withdrawn to another part of Savoy. The nobility are scattered and ruined, and the convents have been changed into gloomy warehouses, or converted to other purposes.

Annecy was known to the Romans ; and it is supposed that the vent for a part of the waters of the lake which are led through the town, and are made to serve many useful ends, is a work for which the inhabitants of succeeding times have been indebted to them. I was struck with the size and appearance of the house Madame de Warens inhabited. A bookseller had directed me to the street, and a little girl, who stepped out of a neighbouring shop, told me all the rest. But I could not make out Rousseau's description of the spot where the interview took place. The rivulet, which he places to the right, is to the left ; and there must be some error of the press, unless he meant to the right of the lady, who had turned to speak to him. I took notice of the private door, through which she must have passed on her way to mass. It has been closed for many years, and is incumbered with ruins.

As we returned from Douing to Annecy, along the borders of the lake, we saw two or three of the boats of the country, making head against the Bise, in a very bungling manner. Their oars were long poles with pieces of board, about six inches square, nailed on near the extremity : so as to oppose some resistance to the water ; it was the very infancy of navigation. On the opposite side were several ancient castles, and among them there was the castle of Menthon, the birth-place of the great St. Bernard de Menthon, whom I am proud to have the honour of introducing to your acquaintance.

We passed a day at Annecy, and then proceeded through a narrow, but well cultivated, valley by the Chateau of Thorens, to a great glass manufactory, which takes its name from the castle, and is situated at the extremity of a deep recess, overshadowed by lofty mountains. I could not but envy a people who, like those of Geneva, or of the neighbouring towns, have a cool, peaceful, and retired valley to take refuge in, from the heat of summer, and the cares of society. From Thorens we crossed a bleak and barren mountain, and passing close to the ancient castle of Clot, which a labourer had bought for *assignats*, at the confiscation of the Mar-

quis de Salle's estate, we fell into the road from Annecy to Geneva, and arrived at Secheron in the evening.

If I have succeeded in my wish to interest the reader in the fate of Geneva, he will be glad to know, that having been among the first to shake off the dominion of France at the abdication of Bonaparte, the Genevans have been rewarded by the particular attention of the allied powers, and have proved themselves still more worthy of it by their subsequent conduct. Geneva is now one of the United Cantons of Switzerland, and has received by cession from the King of Sardinia, a slip of territory on the opposite side of the Arve from where it joins the Rhone to the village of Veiri, and again from Vesenaz to the river Hermance inclusively, the high road to Thonon being the eastern boundary. The inhabitants of the country, who formerly possessed no political rights whatever, are now represented in the General Assembly of the nation, and without any distinction of religion. The same good consequences have resulted at Berne, at Friburg, and in other aristocratic cantons; so that the horrors of the French revolution may be considered as in some measure alleviated. Neuchatel has voluntarily returned to the very qualified sovereignty of the king of Prussia. There is a great deal in the constitution of this singular little monarchy, that would be well worth the reader's attention. I would have wished that the little republics of Bienne and Mulhausen had been also restored to their independence; but Bienne has been given to Berne, on a footing of equal rights, however, and Mulhausen remains subject to France. The Pays de Vaud found some difficulty in being admitted into the Helvetic union, but overcame the repugnance of the little cantons by the payment of a sum of money, which it was stipulated should be applied to the establishment of schools. I have already mentioned the situation of the Vallais and of the subject countries on the frontiers of Italy. The Grisons remain as they were, except that they form one of the twenty-two cantons.

There are now twenty-two cantons, and though there is more of aristocracy in some than in others, in Berne for instance, yet the bulk of the people have a representation in each; there is a natural guarantee of their respective forms of government, and there are no where any religious disqualifications. The ancient Achaian league, or perhaps the late government of the United States, prior to the adoption of the federal constitution, would give the best idea of the present Helvetic Union; for the different cantons, though governed by a Diet or Congress, made up of two representatives from each canton, in all that respects war and peace, the raising and commanding troops, and the treaty making power, have yet retained the exclusive regulation of their own commercial concerns, a source from which some unhappiness has



arisen between them in the late dreadful years of scarcity, and they have no national jurisdiction in the nature of our federal courts.

The Grisons, who had shared the fate of their allies the Swiss, and fallen before the power of France in 1798, form a canton in conjunction with their once subjects, but now brethren of the Valteline ; and the Italian bailiwicks, who, if they did not groan, must at least have sighed under the absolute sway of some of the little cantons, are now as free as their former masters, by the title of the canton of Tesin. The Vallais, now no longer liable to the odious distinction of sovereign and subject, Geneva, the little monarchy of Neuchatel, without, however, departing from its qualified allegiance to the king of Prussia ; Vaud, Thurgovie, Argovie, and St. Gall are the other new cantons. The miniature republic of Gersaw and the rest have remained annexed each to some neighbouring canton, and find consolation for the loss of independence, it is to be hoped, in the certain and undisturbed enjoyment of all that independence could bestow.

The number of inhabitants in each canton is as follows : The Protestants are marked P. the Catholics are marked C. and where an M. is put, they may be considered as being partly of both religions.

Appenzel M.	55,000	Argovie P.	134,400
Bale P.	42,200	Berne P.	280,000
Fribourg C.	67,800	St. Gall M.	130,300
Glaris M.	19,300	Grisons P.	73,800
Lucerne C.	110,000	Schaffouse P.	32,000
Schwitz C.	28,900	Soleure C.	47,800
Tessin C.	88,800	Turgovie P.	67,700
Underwald C.	22,000	Uri C.	12,000
Vaud P.	155,000	Zurick P.	182,100
Zoug C.	12,500	Geneve M.	47,844
Neuchatel P	49,000	Vallais C.	60,000

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## LETTER XVIII.

At a small distance from St. Sergne, we entered the country formerly known by the name of Franche Comté, which now, together with a portion of ancient Burgundy, forms the department of Jura ; a country of lofty mountains, and of immense forests ; poor to appearance, but rich in inexhaustible mines of iron ore ; in quarries of stone ; in salt springs ; in lime ; in rapid streams, so easily rendered subservient to the purposes of art ; and beyond

all, in the temperance and activity, and well understood industry of its inhabitants.

The village of Moree, where we stopt for an hour or two, may be considered as the commercial metropolis of these mountains ; it is situated in a deep valley, the bare and perpendicular sides of which rise to the height of 1200 feet, leaving only room enough at bottom for two rows of houses and a narrow street, which is the high road to Paris ; but the animating genius of industry, guided by ingenuity, resides in this apparently sequestered spot ; the little stream which in former times covered the valley, is now restrained to a narrow channel, and is rendered useful in twenty different ways. It sets a variety of mills in motion, and is the principal instrument of plenty, and even of opulence, to a district, that could not otherwise, perhaps, have maintained its inhabitants for four days in a year.

Poligny, which is the last town the traveller passes through on his way to Dijon, is at the termination of the mountainous part of Jura, and at the foot of a very high hill, not less perhaps than 1000 to 1200 feet, and presents a very singular appearance. We arrived on the eminence which overhangs the town, about sunset ; the frogs had already covered the plains below, and they exhibited what might have seemed an immense ocean, and such they really were in all probability, some centuries ago, if we may judge at least by the marine fossils which appear in the side of the winding terrace that leads down to Poligny. On the other side, and on a clear day, the traveller might suppose himself on the Italian side of the Alps ; every species of vegetation in the highest cultivation, with here and there a canal, and rows or clusters of poplar, with one never-ending plain, present a perfect resemblance of Lombardy, while the bilious countenances of the peasantry bespeak the price they pay for the advantages which nature has bestowed upon them. Manure, and frequently the soil itself, is to be carried up several hundred feet on the shoulders of the cultivator ; nor does their labour end here, for as the nature of the country admits of no sort of wheel carriage, the most ordinary comforts of life can only be procured by excessive toil, accompanied in some instances with great personal danger. It is particularly so when fuel is to be procured. The peasant who sets out for that purpose of a winter's morning from his house in the valley, begins by ascending some neighbouring mountain, and having there made up the pieces he has cut into the form of a rude sledge, and secured them together properly on the brink of the declivity, he takes his station on the load, so that he can touch the ground at pleasure with his feet, and committing himself to a narrow, winding, slippery path, and frequently of beaten snow, and generally bordered from place to place by precipices, he gets back to his

family with almost aerial velocity. Others again, who live on the top of some naked hill, and who cannot find a declivity sufficiently gentle to admit of their using a sledge on the mountain where wood is to be obtained, are obliged to throw it down the precipices, at the bottom of which they afterwards collect and carry it home on their shoulders. The proverb of the country is, that wood warms a man twice. Their winter in those parts of Jura is very long, and the snow frequently accumulates in such a manner, that they have no means of egress from their houses, but by the chimney, from which they may be seen sallying upon occasion, with snow shoes, to prevent their sinking. People so situated pay, I presume, no idle visits, and their fare is not such as would tempt one to ask hospitality. It consists of bread baked at the setting in of the winter, very ordinary cheese, and a little smoked beef for particular and very great occasions : their drink is of the same humble description, and when best, is but a sort of cider, made of wild apples, mixed with all the various sorts of berries which the woods afford.

Of this interesting country, its lakes and mountains, its streams and forests, its towns, castles, and ancient convents, and of all that can engage the attention of the natural philosopher and the agriculturists, Mr. Lequinio, whose name I have frequently mentioned to you, has composed two interesting volumes ; and it were to be wished that his talents of observation could now be as well directed to the neighbourhood of Edgefield Court House, in South Carolina, where he has found repose, after the tumults of a life long agitated by the storms and horrors of the French revolution.

The summer of the lofty mountains, though short, is sufficient for a crop of barley, oats, and potatoes ; some hay is also made, and the natural herbage affords pasturage to great numbers of cows, who are driven up from the valleys ; 80 cows give 50lb. of cheese a day when the grass is at its best, besides which the milking of the evening is made to produce 5lbs. of butter at the commencement, and at the end of the season, the produce is much less.

Even the dogs in this industrious country, are rendered useful ; they learn to work in a wheel, as well as a horse or an ass, and are made to set the bellows in motion in the greater part of the forges and blacksmiths' shops. The people, without much information, are in general sagacious and sensible.

Though we are now in the highest part of France, which may be presumed, from the direction of the various streams we passed, yet the country we travelled through, from Poligny, through Dole and Auxonne, to Dijon, consisted principally of extensive meadows, in which I saw no appearance of drains or

banks ; the rise and fall of the river is so great, in all probability, as to render the first unnecessary, and the others useless. The low grounds of the Garonne are very preferable, and afford a much more agreeable prospect. At Auxonne the works were still entire, but there was a silence and solitude within, which contrasted singularly with the external military appearance. It is on the banks of the Saone, and in a country of fine pasturage, and consequently of fever and ague. In rising from the low grounds of the other side, we were still upon a level plain ; the meadows of former times no doubt, before the river had made itself so deep a bed, and passed through well cultivated fields, to Dijon. We rested here a day, and found ourselves in one of the cleanest and best-built towns in France, and with the singular accommodation of side-pavements. In losing its parliament and its university, Dijon has been deprived of its two principal sources of prosperity ; for though it still possesses manufactories, and the advantage of the canal of Burgundy, it is considered as going to decay. The environs, which are diversified by an appearance of gentle hills, were formerly inhabited by people of fortune, who were principally of the robe ; nearly all of them were swept away by the torrent of the revolution, and are now deeply regretted by those very peasantry, who were so misled at the time as to exult in their destruction.

My intention had been to go from Dijon to Troyes, but we were told that the roads were bad and hilly, though turnpikes are every where established, and were advised to pass through ——— and Auxonne, as the nearest and best road to Paris. I should have liked to go by Troyes, it would have done me good to have seen what remained of the castle where Henry V. of England was acknowledged regent of France, and where he was married to the fair Catherine, the beauty of her time.

The weather became so bad as we were leaving Dijon, and it rained so incessantly, that it would be idle in me to think of giving you any description from notes made at the time. We passed through Burgundy and a part of Champagne, to as little purpose, almost, as if we had been travelling through the wilds of North or South Carolina ; with this difference, that the houses were every where tight, and the accommodations good. I have been frequently at a loss to conceive, what the bad reputation of French inns in general was owing to ; they are frequently dirty indeed, and the doors and windows shut badly ; and the *filles*, when she does appear, is not always pretty, but the people of the house are civil, the beds are good, and there is every where an abundance of excellent provisions, and particularly of good wine. The conversation I was able to have with the peasantry,

convinced me that they were universally better off than before the revolution.

They appear universally to live in villages ; we frequently saw what appeared to be the houses of country gentlemen ; and sometimes passed a castle, which was generally in ruins. But there was nothing like those neat and comfortable farm-houses which I remember in England, and which are to be found in the eastern states of America.

In passing through Montereau, we halted for a moment on that part of the bridge where the Duke of Burgundy was assassinated, in the 15th century, by some gentlemen of the Armagnac faction, who had mingled in the Dauphin's train. We are now frequently on the banks of the Seine, and saw several large, clumsy barks, as long as ships of the line, descending, loaded with charcoal and provisions. I saw neither handsome country-houses, nor the villas of opulent merchants, nor the boxes of rich tradesmen fast by the road, for the benefit of country air, nor travellers, nor equipage, nor any thing, in short, which bespoke the approach to a capital. The environs of New York and Philadelphia, and particularly of Boston, have a great deal more of that appearance. At length the towers of Notre Dame and the domes of the Pantheon, and of the Invalids, presented themselves, intermixed with the spires of churches, and we shortly after entered the city, by the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, through mean and dirty streets, but over the ground which was so obstinately disputed by Turenne and Condé, in the war of Fronde ; we passed close by the spot where the Bastile once stood, and inclining to the right, proceeded by the Boulevards, to the street of la Ferme des Marthurins, where a small ready-furnished house had been provided for us, with a cook, and a coachman, a person to the full as necessary as a cook, and to the full as expensive.

The Boulevards compose a road leading originally round that part of Paris, which is to the north of the river, and on which was the intended line of defense, when the successes of Henry VIII. in Picardy, threatened Paris with a siege ; the city has for many years gone far beyond it, but the space has been judiciously left, and is shaded with rows of lofty trees, which afford an agreeable walk or ride, while shops of every sort, and the smaller theatres, and *traiteurs*, and coffee-house keepers, and persons of all descriptions, amuse, and sometimes, perhaps, mislead the passing stranger. There are so many descriptions of Paris, that a good account of the city and its curiosities might be written by one who had never been there.

## LETTER XIX.

If you cast your eyes on the plan of Paris, you will easily find in the north-west corner of it, the street of the Ferme des Mathurins ; suppose me setting out thence, and passing by the streets des Mathurins and Caumartin, as far as the Boulevards, crossing them, and proceeding by the street des Capucines, as far as the opening of the Place Vendome. On the right is the Place Vendome, from which a street leads into the street St. Honoré, on the other side of which a passage has been made through the ruins of the Capuchin Church and Convent, to a door which opens into the Gardens of the Tuileries ; near this door was the extremity of the riding school where the Convention sat when Louis XVI. took shelter on the 10th of August, with his family.

It was along the Rue St. Honoré that the unfortunate Queen of France was conducted to the guillotine, in 1793. I have seen a letter from a young Genevan to his father, in which was the following paragraph : “ I was standing with many others, upon the steps of St. Roch, when the cart came by ; it was a common cart, such as is made use of for carrying criminals to execution. The Queen was seated in it, with her hands tied behind her ; her eyes were swelled, from the tears which probably she had shed the night before, but her air was composed, and her looks erect ; she was decently dressed in white, and had on a close cap ; a confessor was seated beside her, but she did not appear to have any conversation with him.”

Suppose yourself now to have proceeded along the Rue St. Honoré, as far as the Palais Royal ; this Palace was built by Cardinal Richelieu, and afterwards presented to the King, and it was hence that Anne of Austria was driven with her children, at the time of those commotions which were excited by the Cardinal de Retz ; it was given to the family of Orleans by Louis XIV. ; and it was the last duke of that name, one of the most unprincipled, and yet most timid ; the most avaricious, and yet the most expensive of men, who gave to the building, and to the garden, their present form. The garden is about 250 yards long, and about 100 broad, with triple avenues of young trees on each side, and an open space along the middle, and is enclosed on three sides with a row of lofty and uniform buildings ; there is an open portico on the ground floor, and the whole is let out to a variety of people, who all contribute in their way, to the enjoyments of the Capital. Watch-makers, jewellers, painters, booksellers, milliners, auctioneers, changers and lenders of money, sellers of every article of dress, from cheap shoes to the most beautiful artificial flowers ; venders of all sorts of fruits and undrest eatables, restaurateurs and con-

fectioners, succeed each other, and there are toy-shops and gaming houses, cabinets of natural philosophy, curious pieces of mechanism, and preparations in wax, to engage the attention of a stranger.

You will observe upon the plan of Paris, that two streets, going from north to south, and for the whole breadth of the city, cross the direction of the Rue St. Honoré in this neighbourhood, nearly at right angles ; one of them leads down to the Pont au Change, and the other to that of Notre Dame ; if we were to continue our way forward, we should after turning two corners, be in the Rue de la Verrerie, and reassuming our former course nearly west, would soon be on the ground where the Bastile stood, which is now a timber yard ; but let us rather turn north-eastwardly to the Halles, and then find our way as we can to the Temple. I never was in a place where there appeared such a profusion of eatables for sale, as in Paris ; there are markets which occupy the whole length of different streets ; there are butchers' stalls where sheep are suspended by the half dozen ; there are shops where game of every sort is for sale, and the Halles alone would seem sufficient to the wants of any place on earth—it has more the appearance of a dirty, disorderly encampment, than a market ; meat and fruit, and flowers and sea-fish, and vegetables of every sort, seem promiscuously mixed, and are offered for sale by those whom Mr. Burke, alluding to their conduct during the revolution, styles, in his emphatic way, the fiends of hell, in the abused forms of the worst of women. Mr. Burke may say what he will, but some of the likeliest faces I saw were among the younger females of this order.

The streets of Paris are narrow and badly paved, and have no side-ways for foot passengers, owing no doubt to the number of large hotels, which are generally built at the farther extremity of a court, and have no communication with the street, but by a carriage way ; they are extremely thronged too, by carriages of various sorts, carts, hackney carriages, gentlemen's coaches and cabriolets ; these last are one horse chairs, with tops, they are a very favourite vehicle, and are generally driven very fast—in general, the horses to the private carriages are good, and no coachman upon earth drive so well, or with so much good humour ; I hardly ever remember seeing a coachman or a carter in Geneva or France, beat his horses in that cruel way, which is too often the case in England and America, or ever saw two coachmen quarrel.

If you stretch a thread from the corner of the Rue Corderie, near the Temple, to the centre of the Place-Royale, which is not far from the Bastile, you will pass through the middle of the part of Paris which is called the Marais. It is at present the peaceful retreat of persons of small fortune, or of such as have

become moderately rich elsewhere, and wish to pass the rest of their days in tranquil obscurity. There are few or no equipages in the streets, and not many people; and they, as well as the shops, have an air of belonging to a different age, or a different nation, from every thing that one sees in the Rue St. Honoré, or at the Palais Royale. If you follow the thread which I have placed in your hands, it will lead you across the Vielle Rue du Temple. The same direction will immediately afterwards carry you to the Rue Culture Saint Catherine, at the corner of which, and the Rue Franc Bourgeois, stands the Hotel de Carnevalet, where Madame de Sevigné resided. It is a large and handsome house, with a court-yard in front; it remains precisely as it was in her time, and is let out to a variety of lodgers, who know by tradition that Madame de Sevigné's apartments were on the first floor in front.

I might now conduct you to the Place Royale, where all is solitude and silence, and to the place where the Bastile stood, or to the Arsenal, where an assemblage of gloomy buildings, and some remains of ancient fortifications, are rendered interesting by the name of Sully; or we might visit the great looking-glass manufactory in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine; but I must refer you for an idea of these to some printed account, and conduct you to the Quinze Vingt, which is in this quarter of Paris; it was originally a hospital for the reception of 300 blind people, and liable, as all hospitals are, to very great abuses.

I have walked frequently for half an hour together in the neighbourhood of the Pont Neuf, and have always observed that the fortune-tellers seemed most attended to. Their usual mode of proceeding is by a pack of cards, which they shuffle, and then gravely examine, revealing as they happen to be paid, no doubt, and from a glimpse of the truth which they are expert in catching, the future intentions and dispensation of providence. I have seen some well-looking young women listening with attention to these seers, and heard one of them tell a young man, in whose countenance there was a great deal of anxiety expressed, the nine of hearts shows me that you have been extremely agitated of late, but I see by the ace of spades that you are about to take a little journey, which will set all to rights again. It is said by those who know Paris, that there are at least fifty fortune-tellers upon the Boulevards between the Vieille rue du Temple and the Rue St. Honoré; some have tables before them covered with hieroglyphics and magical figures, and frequently a wheel with different compartments; the person who consults, having mentioned his question, accepts a piece of paper, to appearance blank, and places it in a compartment of the wheel, a whirl is then given to the wheel, and the slip of paper is drawn out with a sentence



written on it, which the consuler applies as he can to his own circumstances, and the object of his curiosity.

In proceeding along the Quai, as you must now suppose yourself, you have the gallery of the Louvre, and afterwards that of the Tuileries on the right, and the river on the left. On the opposite side, at the corner of the Rue de Beaune and the Quai Voltaire, stands the house once the Marquis de Villette's, and where Voltaire resided on his last visit to Paris ; it was there, and at the theatre, that he enjoyed more of that adoration which is sometimes paid to the illustrious dead, than was ever paid to any man living. He had chosen his apartment in an upper story, and Monsieur de Villette to save him the fatigue of the ascent, had contrived a chair to be raised by a pulley, which conveyed him to it at pleasure, while the adjoining room, which served him as a parlour, was decorated and furnished in imitation of a flower-garden. I am convinced that the return to Paris, after so long an exile of this great patriarch of literature, this apostle of infidelity, who had grown old in the habit of treating all things, even the most sacred, with light and dangerous irreverence, was a fatal oversight in the government. Banished to an obscure corner of France, he carried on his machinations against religion and morality with impunity ; and the triumph of his party, which knew no bounds, and the universal applause, which seemed as much lavished upon the infidel as upon the poet, contributed extremely to that violent fermentation which ended in the revolution. One of his favourites was Condorcet, who, with all the distinction that wit and science could give him, was yet desirous, but a year or two before the revolution, of being thought a Marquis, and of being one of the teachers of the Dauphin.

If I could conduct you homewards with me from the Tuileries to the Rue de la Ferne des Mathurins, you would find us comfortably lodged, in as much retirement from the noise and bustle of the city, as if we were in a country town of New England. Our house is small, but convenient ; and with the kitchen and the porter's lodge, and the porte cochere, and the court-yard, has the appearance of a hotel in miniature. The office of porter, at a public hotel, is generally filled by some inferior tradesman, who can, by pulling a string, raise the bolt without moving from his seat, or his shop-board ; but in private houses he is a servant, so stationed as to attend the gate, and whose business it is to sweep out the rooms and staircase, and to rub the floors every morning ; they are so frequently from Switzerland, that the words Porter and Swiss are become synonymous ; ours, however, is a Savoyard, who having wandered at a very early age from his native mountains, and swept chimneys and cleaned shoes, and gone of errands, and practised all the various modes of living, which

his nation seems in possession of in Paris, is now settled down for life as a porter, contented to get his victuals and about twelve pounds a year. Our coachman is a man advanced in life, with a very grave countenance, and a head nicely powdered. He would not upon any account mount the coach-box of a morning, before two enormous curls, which he wears at the sides, were completely arranged, and he declared to me upon his veracity, that this article of his toilette cost him full sixty sous a quarter. Our cook also must be introduced to your acquaintance; not Dame Leonarda of immortal memory, nor Dame Jacintha whose ragouts were so perfect, understood the business of the kitchen better, but she has other talents which would have qualified her for a distinguished place in the kitchen of the Sicilian Nobleman, and we find ourselves obliged to overlook her accounts very regularly every day. We have a valet de place also, who has all the merit those sort of people ever have; he has his favourites among the tradesmen, and levies, I presume, a small contribution at our expense. A water carrier keeps the house well supplied with water, and since the invention of filtrating fountains, the Seine water is as good as that of your best springs at the mountains.

Let me request you therefore to return to your plan of Paris, and to draw a line, or stretch a thread, from the Southern extremity of the Tuileries to the Luxembourg, which you will easily find; a continuation of the line will strike the Rue St. Jaques, at the English Benedictines; another, at an obtuse angle, will carry you to the Gobelin manufactory, hence the Rue St. Marcel will conduct you to the ancient and now obscure church of St. Medard, and you will afterwards pass along the Rue Neuve d'Orleans, to the Garden of Plants. From the Garden of Plants we will return homewards by the Rue St. Victor, and the place Maubert, and across the island of the city, where the ancient palace of Justice, on the one side, and the Metropolitan church of Notre Dame, on the other, will deserve our attention as we pass. Having crossed to the Quai Voltaire, the line soon brings you to the Rue des Petits Augustins, and shortly after to the ancient abbey of that name. This street, des Petits Augustins, was formerly a canal, that divided the Scholar's meadow, where Sully describes himself as having exposed his life in so careless a manner, after the death of Madame de Rosny: at the upper end of it stands the former convent of Augustin monks, where all the monuments and other pieces of ornamental sculpture, which could be saved from the ruin of the churches during the revolution, have been deposited: these curious relicks of ancient art, and memorials of distinguished persons, are here arranged in different apartments, according to their respective antiquity; and one as the satisfaction to trace the progress of sculpture through the course of many

succeeding centuries. When the tombs at St. Denis were opened, the pretence was to make use of the leaden coffins, which had been accumulated there in so many ages, for the purpose of war, but the chief object of the wretches who then governed, was to lower the Regal Character in the estimation of the nation by this last insult. Fortunately, with all their desire to destroy, the greater part of the monuments were preserved, and are now here ; the intrinsic merit of the sculpture, in those pieces which were meant to represent the earlier kings, is very small indeed. Clovis, Chilperic, and Clotaire, are so many blocks of misshapen stone, in which there is at best but a rude imitation of the human figure ; it was this last, who, as he felt himself dying, was heard to exclaim, " And who is this mighty God of Heaven, that can at his pleasure remove the greatest monarch upon earth !" For so this barbarian supposed himself. The statue of St. Louis, however, is somewhat better : it is formed, indeed, like the others, of very ordinary stone, and the features are considerably defaced ; but in this rude representation, and after a lapse of six centuries, there is an air of goodness and simplicity, and more of countenance, than I could ever discover in many of the master-pieces of Grecian art. The leaden saint upon his hat, and the air of cunning and malignity, are expressive of Louis XI. ; the guards of this wretched tyrant watching day and night over his person, and the walls of his castle covered with iron spikes, and his looking about so anxiously in his last moments for some earthly mediator between heaven and himself, would prevent any succeeding monarch, we might suppose, from giving way to those suspicions, and to that implacable resentment, which rendered the latter part of the reign of Louis so fatal to his subjects ; but man will not be benefited by the experience of others. The face of Louis XII. is that of an emaciated old man, but I considered it with great attention and respect ; it was he who said, upon being told that the Parisians ridiculed his mode of living, I had rather they should laugh at my parsimony and simplicity, than be made to weep by my oppression and tyranny. The historian of his life says, he might have lived many years longer, had he not, in order to please his young wife, the beautiful Mary of England, so materially altered his mode of living. He had always been accustomed to dine at eight ; but he now dined at noon, and instead of going to bed at the good old hour of six, he would frequently sit up till near midnight.

It is at the same time highly gratifying to trace the progress of sculpture through so many centuries, and to observe the changes which have taken place in dress. The stiff stays, and long waists of former days, are still more frightful, I think, in stone, than in colours. The art of sculpture took its rise among the

fine forms, and in the fine climate of Ancient Greece; thence it passed to their conquerors the Romans; but the removal of the seat of government, together with every eminent artist, and every valuable production of former times under Constantine, and the inroads of barbarians afterwards, put an end to the art in Rome, while the zeal of the image-breaking kings, and the prevalence of the Mahometan religion, were fatal to it in the East. It is said to have been revived in France under St. Louis, and to have attained its utmost perfection there, before the time of Louis XIV. when the simplicity and elegance of antiquity were neglected, for imaginary taste and false dignity.

A noble prospect of all Paris is commanded from the top of the Pantheon, and as I foresee that the objects I have yet to speak of may occupy several letters, I will avail myself of the situation, and conduct you, in imagination, to the upper gallery, whence we may cast a rapid glance over the greater part of Paris. The city, divided into nearly two equal portions by the river, is at our feet, and the circular line of barriers at the outlet of every street which communicates with the country, shows how the inhabitants of this great metropolis are shut in whenever their master pleases, as sheep are by a butcher. A good map and some previous knowledge of the city, enables one easily to point out the different churches, hospitals, and palaces, and to distinguish the military school, where the present Emperor received his education, at the expense of the late King; the Hotel of the Invalids, and the Champ de Mars. It was on this spot that Louis XVI. accepted of a constitution which was his destruction; it was here that Bailly, one of the most humane and enlightened men of the age, drank to the very lees the cup of human misery; and it was here, that the representatives of the nation could, for six years successively, swear eternal hatred to that form of government to which they have since sworn allegiance. The Hotel of the Invalids is particularly conspicuous, and the more to our satisfaction, from our knowing that two or three hundred officers, and from three to four thousand soldiers are comfortably accommodated there for the rest of their lives. You will see a description of this great and magnificent building in any book of travels into France, and particularly of the dome; which, though superb in execution, was a very useless and costly addition to so charitable an establishment. Several hundred standards, taken in war, are here displayed in a very graceful manner.

Between the Luxembourg, the Invalids, and the river, is the Faubourg St. Germain, where the greater part of the principal nobility resided at the time of the royal government. Their hotels are in general at the extremity of a court, separated from the street by high walls, and with spacious gardens behind. A

great number of these have been sold as national property and are converted into lumber houses or stores ; for the new rich, who might alone apply such buildings to their former purposes, choose to be in the busier part of Paris, and nearer the Tuileries ; but some are yet in possession of the rightful proprietor, and I am told that the best company, in the proper sense of the word, is still to be met with in the Fauxbourg St. Germain.

To the east and south-east of the Pantheon are the Fauxbourgs St. Victor and St. Marceau, remarkable for having furnished, during the whole of the revolution, a crowd of individuals, whom the different parties used as instruments against each other ; and remarkable also for manners and customs, extremely remote from those of the brilliant parts of Paris. I should like, before we quitted the Pantheon, to give you some idea of that noble building, the purposes of which may be changed a great many times yet before it can be completely finished. It is in the best style of architecture, with a front composed of twenty-two Corinthian columns fifty-eight feet in height ; fifty-two others of smaller dimensions surround the exterior of the dome ; the interior of the building consists of four naves, decorated with one hundred and thirty Corinthian columns, and in the centre of these is the dome, which presents sixteen others, that support a spherical roof, from which rises a second and more elevated vault. It would, if finished, be such as you might suppose the Temple of Fame, in Roman or in Grecian times ; and the present intention is, that the whole shall be surmounted by a colossal statue of the goddess, with all her attributes. From the Pantheon we will go to the Gobelins, which have been so frequently and so well described, and then to the ancient church of St. Medard. There is no art, perhaps, in which the first rude essays are more remote from subsequent perfection than that of tapestry. The veteran of the fish market, with a face marked by bruises, and in all the glow of habitual intemperance, is not more removed in appearance from the *elegante*, who shivers at a breeze, than the hangings we sometimes meet with under the name of tapestry, are from the production of the Gobelins. Their performance is always a copy from some picture, and their mode of working resembles weaving rather than embroidery ; the threads are perpendicular. These they intermingle in all the infinite variety of colours that the subject requires, working on the wrong side, reversing every thing, consequently, as an engraver does, when he works without the assistance of a mirror, and unable, but in imagination, to trace the progress of their work ; they sometimes rise, indeed, and go round the frame to observe the resemblance to the original, and occasionally undo a part of what they had completed. The workmen are in the

employment of government, and receive less wages than a negro man does for sawing wood in America. They are, as you may suppose, with such wages, rather meanly dressed, and have a squalid unwholesome appearance, from being so continually confined to a sitting posture. To approach one of these persons at work, and to behold what rises under his forming hands, is to have an idea of something like creation—Zeuxis, selecting from the assembled beauty of Greece those traits which might best become the goddess of love; the bold approach of some, the reluctance of others, the bashfulness which hides itself behind a companion, and the perfection of the human form in every limb and feature are, I might almost say, divinely expressed.

The cathedral of Notre Dame is too much crowded with houses to be seen to advantage; it possesses, however, that solemn and stately air which distinguishes the best specimens of Gothic architecture. It is shaped as a cross, is 780 feet long and 144 broad, and of sufficient height, but it did not answer the expectations I had formed of the metropolitan church of a great empire. This sentiment was probably occasioned by the impression which the dome of the Pantheon had left upon my mind, and by the nakedness of the walls, which I had once seen covered with paintings and tapestry, and adorned with several handsome and venerable monuments. These were destroyed in great measure by the rage of republicanism in 1793, together with all the sculptural and architectural ornaments on the outside of the church; where many headless kings and mutilated saints still remain, sad witnesses of the phrenzy of those times. It was here that Napoleon was anointed emperor by the Pope, with not so many demonstrations of joy from the spectators within, or the mob without, as the paper of the day pretends, but with perfect complacency and submission; they gazed upon the ceremony and upon the procession, as they would have done upon any other splendid show, while those at a distance conversed about it, as they might have done about the coronation of a king of Persia. I saw his imperial robe, stiff with gold and with embroidery; it is so large that it must have sat upon him like the cloak of Hercules upon the shoulders of a dwarf. The priest who had the care of these, showed us at the same time, many of the sacred utensils which were used at the time of the coronation, together with others for the celebration of mass, which had been presented by the emperor, whose virtues he descanted upon as fluently as he would have done some time ago upon those of Louis XVI.

The palace of Justice, which is towards the other extremity of the island, was formerly the residence of the Kings of France, and it was here that Charles VI. suffered those indignities which were repeated at the expense of Louis XVI. in 1792. And it is

singular with how little deviation, in those wretched times too, as in these last. The populace of Paris appears to have been excited with peculiar ferocity—not satiated with blood, and deeming, says Hume, the course of justice too dilatory, they broke open the prisons, and put to death all who were confined there. The building has been at different times enlarged and embellished, and now presents a noble facade on an ascent of several steps; in front is a court, which is enclosed by an iron railing, very handsomely finished and decorated, and said to be 130 feet in length.

There are still a great many things worth describing on the south side of the river, but I shall either refer you to books or speak of them hereafter, and will now return to the ancient Convent of the Carmelites, at the upper end of the Rue St. Jaques, in order to give you some account of the establishment for the instruction of the deaf and dumb, whom you must hereafter permit me to call the *Sourd-muets*. I do not like a mixture of the two languages, but the French appellation in this instance is certainly the most convenient. I perceived by the Encyclopedia, that great and successful efforts were made, even before the commencement of the last century, to instruct such unfortunate persons as were born deaf and dumb; but if we are to suppose, and I think we may, that the Abbe de l'Epee was informed of all that was done before his time, and of the method pursued, the progress made was very small indeed in comparison of what has been since effected. The utmost that the scholars of the Abbe de l'Epee attained to, was the knowledge of some sign by which they could express any word; and of the art of writing down the word required when the sign was made by a persons killed in their mute language; some short and trivial questions too they could answer in writing, because the same questions had been repeatedly made; but they were far from being able to compose, or to express their ideas on the most common subjects. They were somewhat in the situation of a schoolboy whose knowledge of Latin is confined to the Vocabulary, or of a Chinese youth, who may have consumed several years of his life in learning to write down a great variety of characters, which are the words of their language, for each of which he can give a name without being able to affix the most distant idea to any one of them.

There is a simplicity in the language of these people, when they express themselves upon paper, which is very interesting. It happened once to Massieu to have his pocket picked, and his attestation before the magistrate was as follows. "I am a *sourd-muet*. I was standing with others, *sourd-muets* like myself, looking at the pyx of the holy Sacrament, when a man perceived a



red pocket-book in my right coat pocket. He approached me gently and took it. My hip informed me of what happened. I turned towards him : he was frightened, and threw the pocket-book against the leg of another man, who picked it up and gave it to me. I took him by the coat ; he turned pale and trembled. I beckoned to a soldier and showed him the pocket-book. The soldier brings this man-robber before you, and I have followed. I swear before God he took my pocket-book. He dares not swear before God. I hope he will not have his head cut off, but only be made to row upon the sea, for he has not killed."

The first effusions of his mind, when his teacher had made him feel the necessity of a Supreme Being, and convinced his reason that there was a God, were truly astonishing. He begged that he might return home and give the blessed information to his parents, and to his brothers and sisters ; and when he was informed that the government had decreed him twelve hundred livres a year, as an assistant teacher ; " ah, how happy I am !" was his exclamation, " my dear parents now can never want bread."

Notwithstanding the change of behaviour which is upon some occasions perceivable, the French are in society the same good-humoured people they ever were, and well behaved, though not of manners so refined as formerly. It is never thought necessary to introduce to each other persons who meet together in the same drawing-room, or at the same table, and nothing perhaps could better prove the general discretion which prevails in all companies. The last play, the opera, the different performers, some new novel, or some great event, all knowledge of which is built upon the bulletin of the day, furnish a great abundance of topics. The French are more generally than they used to be in the custom of learning foreign languages, and the residence of so many exiled families in England during the late war, has rendered it not uncommon to hear English well spoken in mixed companies.

The traveller, whether he enters or leaves Paris, is struck with the air of squalid poverty in the suburbs, and with the silence and solitude which prevail in the environs of the city. The road to Orleans is one of the most frequented in France, it is broad and straight, and the pavement, which was laid in the time of Louis XIV., is in such perfect preservation, that one is at a loss to conceive how the government can have a pretext for the number of expensive turnpikes which the traveller has to pay his way through. I took notice of the shafts Young speaks of, which lead down into the quarries ; they afford a passage to the labourers, and to the blocks of stone which are raised by a wheel worked by horses. A shaft of this sort opening a passage into a tin mine upon the coast of Cornwall in England, has been sunk to the sea



at the distance of three hundred yards from high water mark; a steam engine upon a great scale, which is erected on the shore, and communicates by means of pipes with the mine, keeps the workmen from being incommoded by water, and they think no more of the waves which are heard to roar incessantly over their heads, than we do of the artificial thunder of a playhouse.

We found the inns as upon the other great roads—with neither doors nor windows that could shut well, but abounding in every thing an epicure could wish, and furnished with good beds and the best of wine.

In passing rapidly along between Estampes and Angerville I was struck with the appearance of some ornamental building on a commanding situation, and was told that it stood on the estate once held by the farmer-general Laborde. Few families were so rich, and very few indeed so conspicuous, for the noble use they made of their immense wealth; but they have been singularly unfortunate; two of the sons were lost on the northwest coast of America, and the father, with others of his children, suffered death at the guillotine. Madame Laborde is now the only survivor of this once flourishing family; she lives, I was told, in the ancient mansion house, which, together with a small portion of the estate, remained unsold, and finds consolation, under all the afflictions she has been exposed to, in acts of kindness and generosity to the neighbouring poor.

There came on a snow storm as we left Angerville, and though we were now in one of the most highly cultivated parts of France, yet the view might have reminded the traveller of the deserts of Arabia, whilst the few farm houses that appeared, had such high walls and so many out buildings, that they had the appearance of strong holds, where the inhabitants of a whole district had retired for shelter against some predatory excursion of a roving banditti. At length we reached the forest of Orleans, which is very much diminished, and entered the city by the very gate through which the valiant Joan of Arc so boldly and so successfully sallied out against the English at the famous siege, on the event of which the fate of all France once depended.

Orleans stands in one of the most fertile parts of France, and had some manufactories which have shared the fate of all those that in any degree depended upon foreign commerce; but being upon the Loire, by which a continued intercourse is kept up with Nantes, and in the vicinity of the canal, by which the waters of the Loire are made to communicate with those of the Seine, it has been enabled to retain a degree of internal trade.

The Loire, which is at times very shallow, was now full. Several large boats, under a press of sail, were coming up from Nantes. The borders of the river, as far as the view extends, are

covered with meadows, vineyards, and gardens. Towns and villages, and what appeared more like farm houses than any thing I had hitherto seen, were thickly strewed along, and the whole was a magnificent assemblage of interesting objects. Our next stage through a fine country and by the side of the Loire, was to Blois, a very old, and no very clean town. It is situated on a slope which rises gently from the water's edge.

The principal growth of the country we could command a view of seemed to be vines, and there are some manufactories in the town, which are said not to flourish. That of cutlery, at least, does not, if I may judge from the importunity of those who brought us some specimens to look at, and who seemed as anxious that we should purchase a trifling article or two, as if they had been asking our charity.

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## LETTER XX.

SHORTLY after leaving Blois, we entered upon the embankment which protects the low grounds from the overflowings of the Loire. It rises very gradually to an elevation of fourteen or fifteen feet above the level of the cultivated land, and is about twenty-five feet wide on the top. It rises very gradually to an elevation of fourteen or fifteen feet above the level of the cultivated land, and is about twenty-five feet wide on the top. It lies on one or the other side of the river, or on both, according to the situation and extent of the low grounds, which are every where in a state of the highest cultivation. Wherever they terminate and the high land commences, it is generally by a slope sufficiently gentle to be also in cultivation, and, for the most part, in vineyard; there are some vines also in the low grounds which are trained from tree to tree, as in Lombardy. These last afford good grapes, I am told, but the wine they produce is of an inferior quality. The care of the embankment is by no means left to the individual over whose land it passes, and whose possessions it protects; it is a general concern, and being by far the greater part of the way the high road of the country, it is kept up, and repaired by the profits of the different turnpikes. The earth which was necessary for the construction of this useful work was generally taken from the outside in dry seasons, and there are sluices at certain distances for letting off any great accumulation of rain water.

We passed through Amboise, and took a hasty look at the exterior of the ancient castle where Charles VIII. was born, and which is connected with some important events in the history of France. We saw Chanteloup far upon our left, and could dis-

tinguish the column which Monsieur de Choiseul erected during his exile, in honour of those who came to visit him.

To the castles of the former nobility, which are spread along the river, there were now added, as we approached Tours, a number of comfortable houses, which bespoke the prosperous trade of that ancient city in better times, and there began also to be seen some singular habitations scooped out of the soft rock which must have formed the banks of the river, in days of yore, before it had made for itself so deep a channel. The chimneys to these are opened through the rock, and smoke is frequently seen to rise amidst horses and cattle, who are thus grazing on the top of a human habitation. These cavern houses are generally inhabited by the class of labourers, and afford others the facility of having very cool and dry cellars at a trifling expense. We shortly after passed the ruins of the venerable and once wealthy and distinguished monastery of Marmoutier, and entered Tours over a noble bridge of fifteen arches, which leads into one of the handsomest streets we had ever seen in France. The houses are of hewn stone, their fronts have a uniform appearance, and there are side pavements for the accommodation of foot passengers. All that heaven has ever bestowed upon man was once to be enjoyed in this fine country. But their manufactories, which formed a principal source of their prosperity, are gone to decay, and the overplus of what the earth in its utmost fertility produces but suffices a livelihood and the means of paying taxes. In walking about the town, I saw nothing that looked like opulence or prosperity, and the play-house, which we attended in the evening, was the very emblem of wretchedness.

On leaving Tours we took a last look at what remains of Marmoutier, which once belonged to the Benedictines. Those good fathers who, like all of their order, were distinguished for the sanctity of their lives and for their erudition, here lived in the centre of a great estate, which they cultivated to advantage, and whilst the growing ornaments of their church, and their various buildings, encouraged artists of every denomination, their hospitality and charity consoled every wanderer in distress, and their charity relieved the poor.

Our road was now entirely confined to the embankment, and as the low grounds were in some places of no great breadth, we had an opportunity of examining several of the cavern houses as we passed along; they are in some places, where the cliff recedes sufficiently as it ascends, in tiers one above the other, and it then sometimes happens, that the smoke of one man's habitation rises up in the midst of his neighbour's garden.

The peasants in the neighbourhood of La Fariniere, like those of every part of France I had hitherto visited, have benefited by

the revolution. They have paid their debts in depreciated assignats, and they have added to their little portion of property by purchases of lands on very easy terms: they have also acquired, as I have formerly mentioned, some little appearance of political privileges, and have been relieved from the *taille* and the *Gabelle*.\*

From all these the peasant is now free, and he is free from the mockery of justice in the seigneurial courts, which comprised every species of despotism, and occasioned an irreparable loss of time, and enormous expenses on the most trifling occasions. These taxes, though heavy, are now in proportion to the property they hold, and to their consumption. Their wages, as labourers, are increased, and every article which they can raise for the use of the neighbouring towns commands a higher price; they are, in short, better fed, better clothed, better protected by the law, and live in better houses than before the revolution. What they feel most is the Conscription.†

We now passed more rapidly than I could have wished, along a very beautiful and interesting country. We had left the great road which leads from Paris to Bourdeaux, we were remote from that which travellers generally take to Nantes, and found ourselves among a people whose good nature and simplicity reminded us of Switzerland. It was entirely a new race of tall, straight men, who, with their overalls, and short coats, and large flapped hats, gave me a very perfect idea of a Vendean soldier.

We now quitted the river, and passing under the ancient and gloomy walls of Angers, which would hardly refuse to open its gates to such armies as Shakespeare brings before it in his tragedy of King John, we stopped for the night at Varades, where we found excellent accommodations in an inn, whose appearance by no means seemed to promise such. We had made the same observation at Les Rozières the evening before, and it is the more surprising as there are so few travellers. It has frequently happened to us to go a hundred and sometimes two hundred miles

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\* By the word *Gabelle* is to be understood the excise on salt, and the police which regulated the distribution of it. In the first place, every family was held liable to consume a certain quantity of salt every year, and this they were to purchase at a certain price, whether they wanted it or not, and as the temptation to smuggle an article so necessary and so easily transported was irresistible; it became a fruitful source of recruits for the galleys, besides occasioning a great many fines, imprisonments, and whippings, and in some instances death. It brought down ruin and disgrace, in short, upon many men, many women, and many children, extending upon a yearly average to at least 3500 people, of which in one instance two hundred and one were children.

† The Conscription was forced on France by the malignant conspiracies of the external despots. It was no voluntary act of the revolutionary government, but forced on them in the defensive wars in which France was engaged for the support of liberty and independence against the insolent assumptions of legitimacy, from 1790 to 1815.—EDIT.

without meeting any sort of carriage, except waggons, in which alone almost the sole exchange of merchandize takes place between Paris and the distant provinces.

There are but few canals in France, and the utility of that of Orleans, which makes a figure on the maps from the waters it connects, is very much diminished by the uncertainty of the navigation of the Loire. Boats have been known to be three months waiting for a sufficient depth of water and a fair wind between Nantes and Orleans.

We had no sooner lost sight of the river, than the face of the country changed ; it no longer reminded me of the low grounds in Carolina, of what they might be converted into, I mean, but rather of some part of Massachusetts or Connecticut ; the surface of the earth was undulated, and it was diversified by an intermixture of woods and different sorts of culture divided by hedges, and interspersed with villages. A traveller, who had time to examine this country, might very well bestow some weeks in visiting the different towns of the *ci-devant* Anjou ; many of them are rendered interesting by events which they have been the scene of in former days, by the sieges they have sustained, by the memory of the distinguished personages they have given birth to, and by what remains of their once flourishing manufactories.

The productions of the soil, and the modes of agriculture, would also afford very proper objects of curiosity. The earth is rich in mines of coal, of iron, of copper, and of lead ; and there are quarries of marble and of slate, with animal and vegetable fossils without end.

The first post-house from Angers was so near a very ancient castle, that we had time to get the doors opened and to enter it. As it lay in the way of the Vendean and republic armies during the civil war, it had been stripped of every sort of furniture, and bore marks of having served as barracks. The apartments are spacious ; an ancient castle, however, must be at best but a cold and gloomy habitation.

We now saw marks of war which had never before occurred, in the remains of houses that had been burned, and I heard a great deal of the miseries the inhabitants had been exposed to, miseries which reminded me of somewhat similar scenes in our own country.

The environs of Nantes bespeak the opulence of former times, but the situation is low, and must, I should suppose, expose the inhabitants to autumnal fevers. The first streets we entered were narrow, and the houses old and decayed ; but we soon found ourselves in what appeared a new city, and after driving across a handsome square we entered the largest and most commodious hotel we had any where seen. I felt and it gave a tincture of

somewhat like melancholy to my thoughts, as we drove along the last post that we were now to take leave of travelling in France, which is certainly one of the most agreeable countries in the world to travel over ; the accommodations are generally good, the roads excellent, and the horses as strong and willing as they are coarse and ugly ; as to the postillions they are as lively and good-natured as ever, and much less importunate than formerly, but they are still very great coxcombs, and that, too, with a union of wretchedness which is not, perhaps, to be met with in any other country upon earth. One of those, who drove us this last stage, and who I could see was a very pretty fellow in his own eyes, would have gathered a crowd about him in America. Whisks of straw served as boot-legs to his wooden shoes, and a piece of old tapestry, with figures of men and horses, and towers and battlements, "bosomed high in tufted trees," protected him from the weather, whilst his sun-burned face was partly shaded by the remains of a rose-coloured handkerchief, which was thus converted into a substitute for a hat.

And now, my dear daughter, adieu. I shall write you no more letters from France. In a few days we are to be at Paimbœuf, where I have secured as comfortable lodgings as such a place admits of. You must now, with that pliancy of disposition which I have always given you credit for, figure yourself at the little fishing town of Paimbœuf. Before you, on the other side of the Loire, is the Lower Brittany of former times, the seat of the war of the Chouans, and now divided into a number of new names. Behind you is the country formerly the province of Poitou, and the principal seat of the war of La Vendée, and on the left is the great Atlantic. About south-east from Paimbœuf is the little island of Noirmontiers, where the inhabitants, though poor, and taught by their own experience alone, have recovered a great deal of valuable land from the ocean by means of dykes. Their mode is, when they begin a work of this sort, to construct it at first so low that the tide passes over it at half flood ; openings are left for the discharge of the waters, but it is very gradual, and a great deal of sediment and of sea-weed is deposited. When this has continued for some time, and the land to be reclaimed appears cultivable, the dyke is raised ; it is made as strong as the means within the reach of the inhabitants will admit of, and is sometimes even faced with stone. Noirmontiers is also remarkable for the quantity of salt made there. Some of the canals which have been dug to carry the salt water for this purpose, are as much, I am told, as three miles in length.

You may form an accurate idea of the country, over which the worst of all civil wars was extended, by looking a moment at the map. A line from Saumur down the Loire, and along the sea-

coast to La Rochelle, and reaching again to Saumur, would comprehend nearly the whole, and you will perceive, near Fontenoy, now honoured with the name of Napoleon, the little stream which has given name to this disastrous war, as that of La Gironde did to an unfortunate party.

The last town we passed an hour in was St. Nazere, at the mouth of the Loire, and it was not without sensations in which somewhat of melancholy entered, that I felt myself stepping into the ship's boat with the certain knowledge that I should never more land in Europe. We sailed on the seventeenth of April, and had a great deal of stormy weather, being exposed to a narrow strip of easterly winds almost the whole way. The most unpleasant circumstance which occurred, was the falling in with a British sloop of war; they were from the foggy atmosphere of St. John's, in Newfoundland: they had not shared a shilling of prize-money since they had been upon the station, and were extremely rapacious and ill-behaved. I now saw, for the first time, how oppressive power can render itself without proceeding to what may be deemed hostilities; and how much the reputation and interests of a great nation may be trifled with by their unworthy servants. Our passage was a week longer than the one to France, and not in every respect as pleasant; nor was the first sight of land, though very agreeable, yet quite as delightful as that of the mountains of Cape Ortegal had been; it was the difference of romance and history, of splendid fiction and of sober truth. But I enjoyed extremely the surprise of some Frenchmen we had on board, when they were told, that the houses which they admired on either hand as we approached New York were the property of farmers, who sold their produce at market, and who had probably cultivated the soil themselves.

Let a passenger arrive from whence he may, he must always be struck with the beautiful environs of New York, and the reflection of a few moments upon what he has seen in other countries, will convince him, when he comes to know America, that one of the greatest of all blessings is to be born in a free country.

THE END.





